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The economics pastoral—one year later

ROBERT N. BELLAH KAREN SUE SMITH

Peter A. Quinn: IT'S COMING ON CHRISTMAS

Gene Palumbo: RUBEN ZAMORA

Reviews & reports: Casey & the CIA • Afghanistan • After Bork • Guatemala • Robertson's faithful • Zurbaran at the Met • Church & world politics • Civilized engineering • Neo-pagans • Haiti • Summit gazing

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CORRESPONDENCE

A Bork post-mortem

Indianapolis, Ind.

To the Editors: Messrs. Flaherty and Degnan's scholarly discussion of Judge Bork's qualifications for the Supreme Court [September 11] was very interesting, but never confronted the Tenth Amendment: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people." The Civil War and the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Nineteenth Amendments put many prohibitions on the states, but I believe Bork's "judicial restraint" would leave many activities to the 8000 jurisdictions of the states. This state-by-state adjudication causes such confusion, in a nation that technologically is very closely tied together, that justice is denied. Problem areas include not only *Roe v. Wade,* but also AIDS, drug testing, corporate regulation, affirmative action, pornography, obscenity, strict separation of church and state, prayer in schools, criminal rights, rights of the accused, rights of privacy, sodomy, contraception, homosexuality, and surrogate mothers.

Our contrariness, our antagonistic, adversarial legal system leads to wild inconsistencies between jurisdiction, and of course makes lawyers rich. The line between "judicial legislation," and establishing practical legal precedents is difficult to draw, but I believe this is the job of the Supreme Court. I am sure Judge Bork's "judicial restraint" would make it more difficult for the Court to perform this function.

BOB TWITCHELL

Bork to basics

Park Ridge, Ill.

To the Editors: Would you agree on two Bork philosophies: (1) that it is not the function of the Supreme Court to make law (à la Warren), and (2) that the "right" to privacy is a limited right spelled out in several amendments of the Constitution and cannot be endorsed as a blanket protection for child molesters, pornographers, dope pushers, enemy agents, etc.?

E. HALPIN

Bork & relativism

New Rochelle, N.Y.

To the Editors: Writing in support of the nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court, Daniel Degnan, S.J., ["Bound by the Constitution," September 11] mentions "at the risk of dignifying it," the charge that Bork is a moral relativist, and thus radically opposed to some of the most basic principles of the Constitution's Framers. If true, this would mean that the man held up by conservatives as someone who would interpret the Constitution in accordance with the original intent of its authors would at the same time be one who believes that those men were seriously mistaken in their political philosophy based on a belief in natural rights and a "law of nature and nature's God."

Degnan dismisses the charge, claiming that, while Bork has used some language that might make it seem as if he were a relativist, in fact he is merely guilty of some careless writing. Without offering any specific evidence or definition, Degnan argues that since "Bork shows a deep concern for the moral sense of the community," we need not worry about whether he would understand or sympathize with the most important intentions of the Founders.

It is true that Bork is concerned with society's expression of its moral beliefs in law, but this concern does not imply that he believes that this "moral sense" is right or wrong, true or false. Rather, Bork has written that we cannot ever decide when the public will is just or unjust, for the only way to do so would be to refer to "some system of moral or ethical values that has no objective or intrinsic validity of its own about which men can and do differ." There is, according to Bork, "no principled way to prefer any claimed human value to any other." Thus, the claims or "gratifications" of racists or sexists, if enacted by a majority into law, should be enforced just as all other laws are enforced. The only time the courts should refuse to recognize some claims as law is when they violate specific provisions of the Constitution. This is not because the Constitution "establishes justice," but because it lays out the fundamental rules of the system, rules which have been agreed [upon] and seem practical to follow.

What this means, however, is that when someone such as Clarence Gideon comes to court demanding justice (in his case the right to be defended by a lawyer in his felony trial, although he could not pay for one), but cannot show that the Constitution has some specific provision guaranteeing him his version of what is just, he has no case. In fact, of course, the Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled for claimants such as Gideon, arguing that the Constitution's authors intended to create a fair system of justice. In doing so, the members of the Court were by implication saying that there are knowable standards of fairness and justice, and part of their job is to see to it that the

(Continued on page 760)

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COMMONWEAL

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Summit gazing

The world will be better off when it doesn't need summits. If the Gorbachev-Reagan meeting is to have a genuinely positive long-term outcome, it won't be due to the hoopla or the personal relations, whether warm or frosty, that are established between the two leaders. It won't even be due to the INF agreement, however welcome that may be. The summit will prove its value only insofar as it plays a part in a much larger process.

That process has two dimensions, and they are delicately linked. One is the effort of the superpowers to halt the vicious cycle of weapons development that promises to drag down both nations—or at the very least their economies—into a whirlpool of threat and counterthreat. The other dimension is the evolution of Communist systems, which in the Soviet case carries enormous implications for global peace.

That is why Mr. Gorbachev's every move has been subject to such scrutiny. The ups and downs of *glasnost* and *perestroika* are charted with an attention to daily fluctuations usually reserved for the weather or the stock market. Don't be fooled, warns one chorus of observers, Mr. Gorbachev is no democrat; he's interested in efficiency, not freedom; and his steps toward reform are small and tentative. Don't underestimate what's happening, warns another chorus of observers, Mr. Gorbachev has broken with the Soviet past and set in motion a process that regardless of anyone's intentions, may lead the USSR toward a genuine decentralization of power and a significant reduction of its military hypertrophy.

Both choruses are right. The first rules out any starry-eyed trust in "Uncle Mikhail," and frankly, despite the favorable impression the Soviet leader has made on public opinion, we think American distrust of the Kremlin is a more than sufficient barrier to runaway enthusiasm. The second rules out instant dismissal of the Soviet changes as merely cosmetic, holding out little to the West except a trap and ensnarement—a view that is indeed entrenched in some important corners of the American political elite. Taken together, the two choruses would suggest a cautious openness, a readiness to press steadily forward by considered steps, none of them irreversible, all of them taken with a due regard for Western security—but also with a keen sense of the risks, monetary and moral as well as military, entailed in the status quo. Such steps would include not only the contemplated deep cuts in strategic weapons but also a pact on weapons in space and an agreement on conventional forces in which NATO's manpower edge over the Warsaw pact was traded off for a sharp reduction of Eastern bloc tanks and artillery.

The difficult thing for Americans to accept, whether hawks or doves, is the extent to which the important new developments in the two great Communist empires can only be marginally encouraged by our actions. Neither conciliation nor confrontation can take credit for a process that, after all, has caught up both the China which

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Washington has been befriending and the Soviet Union which Washington has been berating. Internal developments, not foreign carrots or sticks, have produced the "revolutions" of Mr. Deng and Mr. Gorbachev. And internal developments may carry these revolutions down long and tortuous paths in the years—the decades—to come. Shaking off the implanted control of a one-party dictatorship in the Soviet Union, for example, can be compared to the United States' shaking free from the grip that slavery had on a good part of its nineteenth-century economy and politics—or the British crown's retreat from power to figurehead: both of those transformations were stretched over long periods of time and even involved civil wars. Nothing is so predictable about history as its unpredictability. The Chinese and Soviet developments are sure to be marked by setbacks and surprises.

And the moral of that story? It pertains to the *other* dimension of the process of which this summit may prove an important part—the superpowers' effort to rescue themselves and the globe from the nuclear hairtrigger. Here is something the U.S. can control, namely, a calm and reasonable definition of its security needs, one that is not held hostage to every blip in the fever chart of Soviet change, but one that recognizes a national interest in limiting and not just building arms. Articulating that definition will be a major responsibility of political leaders when the INF treaty comes before the Senate next spring. If in the holy season that follows this summit, we contemplate the Creator's promise of peace—and offer thanks for whatever human approximations can be achieved—it should fortify us for the less spectacular but essential tasks of peacemaking that lie ahead.

WHAT NOT TO DO IN HAITI

Crying over spilt milk is one thing; crying over spilt blood is quite another. The November 29 massacres in Haiti, led by former Duvalierist thugs and abetted by soldiers of Haiti's provisional government (CNG), claimed the lives of thirty-four innocent voters, wounded seventy-five others, and signified without ambiguity just how elusive democracy can be.

Election-related violence had escalated since last summer making the November marauding predictable, and possibly preventable had the U.S. pressured Gen. Henri Namphy earlier on. The summer incidents of a trigger-happy military make recent U.S. expressions of "shock" impossible to believe.

Still, there are limits to outside influence — even the Reagan administration's belated but potent policy of cutting off virtually all economic aid until free presidential elections are held. Economic pressures may force an election by destabilizing the Namphy government. The call by radical labor groups for a general strike has the same aim in mind. If these pressures don't work, it is possible that the U.S. or, preferably, a peacekeeping force such as a vivified Organization of American States (OAS) could intervene militarily to insure free elections in Haiti.

But then what? That is the urgent question. If Sylvio C. Claude, Louis Dejoie, Gérard Gourgue, or Marc Bazin were in fact to become president, how long would the peacekeeping force have to remain to protect the new government, its appointments, its supporters? What is the U.S. or, for that matter, the rest of Latin America prepared to do when the terrorists refuse to lay down their arms? In 1915 the U.S. Marines were asked to keep order in Haiti and they stayed until they were thrown out, nineteen years later.

Free elections are necessary, and should be insisted upon by pro-democratic nations everywhere. But elections are only a first step. El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua have had debatably free elections, but do not enjoy democracy. Something in addition to popular will and foreign help is necessary, along with the correct amount and combination of these.

Given the pattern of unsuccessful democracies all too familiar throughout Central and Latin America and the thirty years of U.S. support for the Duvalier dictators, there are certain paths the U.S. should *not* take to promote the democratic aspirations of the majority of Haitians, even if the correct path seems less than clear.

First, the U.S. should not rush in alone. The regional approach — in which the OAS or U.N., for instance, acts as a mediator and patrols an election, if necessary — is essential, particularly in light of anti-American feeling in Haiti fueled by the U.S.'s consistent support of Namphy.

While Namphy has promised elections on February 7, there is no reason to trust his pledge. Instead, as soon as possible, some regional monitoring body should sit down with the slate of presidential candidates and the members of the Election Council (and the CNG if it is willing) to work out some plans. They need to settle upon which military leaders can be trusted to round up the terrorists and what system of justice would be prudent and effective to contain them after an election were held. The outside group should work out an agreement to monitor an election and an agreement to withdraw its troops, contingent upon the containment of the leaders of the violent opposition. Then, in February the peacekeeping and monitoring forces should enter the country to facilitate elections.

Second, the U.S. should not rush to pour in financial aid as soon as a president is elected. Only when the majority of murdering opposition leaders are under lock and key should the U.S. resume its assistance to the Haitian government.

Third, if this best-case scenario does not work, the U.S. still should not rush to back the first leader who appears able to achieve a semblance of stability out of the chaos, unless such a leader enjoys popular support and espouses a vision for a democratic Haiti. A bloody revolution beyond anyone's control is a real possibility we may have to accept, but not until all else fails.

In keeping with its usual holiday practice, the next issue of *Commonweal* will be dated January 15, 1988.

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BEAR IN A BRIARPATCH

PROSPECTS FOR A SOVIET PULLOUT

Afghanistan is high on President Reagan's agenda for this month's summit with Mikhail Gorbachev. The president is sure to demand a quick Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, echoing former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger who declared, "It took the Soviets two weeks to get in, and I don't see why it should take them more than two weeks to get out."

Unfortunately, it is not that simple. Specialists on Afghanistan say the Soviets cannot merely pull out. "There can be no progress on a withdrawal of Russian troops," according to a Western diplomat, without a settlement of the civil conflict that prompted the Soviets to invade in the first place. Thus the United Nations-sponsored negotiation on a timetable for Soviet withdrawal presupposes a political settlement of the conflict *before* the Soviets leave.

The United States can and must contribute to the settlement process. As principal backers of the Afghan resistance and of their Pakistani patrons, the U.S. is a key player in Afghanistan. The American challenge is to promote factions of the Afghan resistance who are willing to seek a political settlement with the Soviet-backed Afghan Communists, while distancing ourselves from the uncompromising fundamentalist parties we now favor. Of course, the U.S. also should continue diplomatically and militarily pushing the Soviet and Kabul Communists toward substantial concessions to end the horrid war they caused.

In the past the U.S. has refrained from pursuing a political settlement, preferring to press the Soviets militarily. The administration capitalizes on the public relations windfall the Soviet war brings. Yet even if the administration wanted to help the Soviets out, the prospects of convincing the resistance to cease fighting and to support a mixed government are very uncertain.

The resistance is comprised of many diverse groups that compete with each other and refuse to coordinate military activities or form a credible political front. When the Soviets finally leave, these various factions will almost certainly fall into civil war in the countryside.

The best organized and funded resistance parties are based in Pakistan. Four of them are Islamic fundamentalists as extreme as the Ayatollah Khomeini. They loathe any compromise, and want to establish an Islamic republic purer than has ever existed in a Sunni Muslim country. The other three principal groups are somewhat less radical and would in theory tolerate a mixed monarchist government of the sort that ruled prior to 1978.

Within Afghanistan itself, a number of tribal groups also fight the Soviets. These groups tend to be "more disposed to compromise with the Communists if this will assure a complete Soviet force withdrawal," according to Selig Harrison, a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace specialist on Afghanistan.

Finally, the former Afghan King, Mohammed Zahir Shah, now residing in Italy, has a following that could grow and rally behind him in an effort to create a transitional government with the Communists.

Pakistan is a central player in the resistance because it houses over three million Afghan refugees and is the conduit for most resistance aid. Pakistan also represents the resistance in the United Nations negotiations and in discussions with the Soviet Union.

The U.S. and Pakistan heavily favor the seven fundamentalists parties in Pakistan. This is part of the problem. "Right now," says a State Department official, the seven parties are "more interested in fighting than dealing." The fundamentalists will not bend as long as the U.S. and Pakistan stay with them. The seven parties' unwillingness to pursue a political settlement has given the Soviets and the Afghan Communists an excuse for their own reluctance to compromise. Now that the Soviets want a way out, the hardline resistance groups obstruct the path. This is why the U.S. and Pakistan share some of the burden for ending the war: it is they who have some chance of lining up the resistance behind a settlement.

Pakistan has conflicting interests. The Zia-led government wants the war to end, but is afraid to stop backing the extreme Afghan parties. Such a switch of allegiance would anger Pakistani fundamentalist groups and could eventually lead to ethnic problems within Pakistan. Pakistan has denied the former king, Zahir Shah, permission to send emissaries into Pakistan to organize Afghan refugees behind a settlement

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effort. The Soviets have already said they would welcome Zahir Shah as a prominent member of a coalition government.

The U.S. should recognize that the former king is probably the only person capable of drawing the Communists and many of the resistance factions into the same room. The administration, in its consultations with Pakistan and the Soviet Union, should urge all sides to give Zahir Shah an opportunity to engineer a settlement. Both superpowers would have to pressure their clients — the Kabul Communists and the seven fundamentalist parties in Pakistan — to go along with the former king's efforts.

For Washington, this approach is riskier than merely supplying arms for an endless war. The resistance, in particular the fundamentalists, is liable to react against American pressure. Moreover, since it is difficult to predict which of the competing factions will win out in Afghanistan, it is safer for the U.S. not to favor any of them and wind up alienating the eventual winners.

Yet there is something to be said for actively promoting a political settlement, too. The recalcitrant parties we have favored are, aside from their fighting the Soviets, hostile to American, Israeli, Saudi, and other pro-Western interests in the region. One of these factions reportedly supplied Iran with the Stinger missiles it used against American forces in the Persian Gulf this October. If some in the resistance are less dangerous and more accommodating, why not encourage them, through Pakistan, to deal their way into power?

All parties in the Afghanistan discussions are aware that any power-sharing arrangement is unlikely to last. "No matter what happens," concludes Louis Dupree, one of America's leading experts on Afghanistan, "struggles for power will probably break out after the Soviet departure, as the Afghan resistance fighters establish regional political pecking orders." The point of a transitional government is to provide the Soviets a "decent interval" to cover the tracks of their retreat. Of course the onus for ending the Soviet occupation rests squarely on the Soviets and the Afghan Communists. They will have to offer meaningful concessions before the resistance will accept a truce. The Kabul government is afraid to let its vengeful opponents into the corridors of power. "The Communists are dead meat if certain of the mujahidin take control," Dupree says.

Despite the Soviets' massive military presence, Moscow does not have complete sway over the Communists. The Communists know that the Soviets would lose credibility by abandoning them without a settlement. A Soviet withdrawal would jeopardize the lives of hundreds of thousands of Communist followers. To avoid such bloodletting, Moscow would have to offer haven to Afghans fleeing the mujahidin. This disturbs the Soviets as well as the Afghans, and provides one more lever for the Kabul leaders to push against the Soviets.

Even with a political settlement, a troop withdrawal requires the Soviets to accept a massive failure and the inevitability of a non-Marxist Afghanistan. The Soviets would have to abide a tenuously "neutral" Afghanistan on its border, after over thirty years of generally pro-Soviet governments there. Russian leaders traditionally do not admit setbacks, especially in foreign and military policy. In Afghanistan, however, Gorbachev appears to have concluded they have no choice.

Fortunately for Gorbachev, he has at least two ways to save face. First, he can blame the whole Afghanistan mess on Brezhnev and the "old thinkers" who ordered the intervention. Gorbachev and the "new thinkers" can be portrayed as the men who led the troops out of the quagmire.

Second, Gorbachev can trade a troop withdrawal for greater Soviet influence in the Middle East and Asia. The Soviets have recently improved their positions in both regions, especially with China, Kuwait, Oman, Iran, and Israel. Each of these countries calls for Soviet withdrawal as proof that Moscow is worthy of normal relations. By pulling back, the Soviets would lessen distrust and buttress their standing with countries much more important than Afghanistan. In the event that the Soviets and Israel reestablish diplomatic relations, Moscow could dampen Arab outrage by ending the occupation of Afghanistan.

The Soviets do have options for leaving Afghanistan. If the United States genuinely wants the war to end, we must be willing to help out the Soviets where we can, while evenly urging Moscow and Kabul to make the sacrifices they eventually must make. Whatever America does, it will be a long time before strife in Afghanistan ends.

GEORGE PERKOVICH

George Perkovich is a fellow of the World Policy Institute, specializing in Soviet-American relations. He has written for The Atlantic Monthly, Social Policy, *and* Nuclear Times.

GUATEMALA TERROR

FOUR CANDLES IN THE WIND

ONCE MORE THE DISAPPEARED

Three Catholic catechists "disappeared" on October 29, 1987, shortly after being taken into the custody of uniformed soldiers of the Guatemalan army — dramatic evidence of the distance yet to be traveled between the promise of freedom and the reality that is everyday life in Central America.

Among all the Central American tragedies, Guatemala's might appear closest to a happy ending. Communist guerrillas that once numbered ten thousand (or more) have been turned back: according to the U.S. military's Southern Command, fewer than two thousand remain at war with this new democracy. Further, in 1986-87, kidnappings and assassinations of leftists have been quite rare. A fairly elected Christian Democrat government, led by a reform-minded moderate, President Vinicio Cerezo, is finishing the second year of civilian rule in a country long dominated by generals. On its surface, then, Guatemala appears to have vindicated the Reagan administra-

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tion's often fruitless search for a middle road in the region.

Life at ground level may always be more mundane, but some Catholic families in Guatemala still can hardly be expected to appreciate this superficial success: they are missing their heads-of-household, moderate government or not. This fall, soldiers took catechists José Ruiz Ramirez, José Velasquez García, and Mañuel Chin Bosos away from their homes, away from the San Basilio Estate where they worked, away from the Rio Bravo municipality of Suchitepequez, Guatemala. Away — where? They have joined the more than thirty-five thousand Guatemalans violently "disappeared" in recent years. These three families have joined in the search made daily by the family of Danilo Morales, a member of a Christian base community, who on October 18, 1987, was seized in front of his home, in Zone 6, Guatemala City.

President Cerezo, a sincere man of no small intellect, has publicly chided the lack of realism of human rights groups (i.e., the "Mutual Support Group," or GAM) which have submitted petitions of *habeas corpus* on behalf of missing souls from earlier times. "These persons are not alive," he has stated more than once. Guatemalan Catholics appreciate the president's candor. Bitterly, most have come to accept Cerezo's realism, especially when the traces of good men and women have become too faint to follow.

But the memory of the four Catholic activists who have "disappeared" this fall are still fresh in their families' minds. Three were seen being beaten by soldiers as they were hauled away. In Rio Bravo (indeed, on the San Basilio Estate!), peasants know that it is important to act quickly to save lives. Their neighbor (and fellow catechist), Señora Benita Tale Coche, once was released. She told the locals of her April 1986 torture by soldiers at the military base in Mazatenango; then she vanished a second time last year. Peasants at San Basilio remember that, when the world was not informed of the "disappearance" of local residents Miguel Ulario (April 11, 1986) and Baltazar Quicán Coche (April 3, 1986), cries for mercy in Guatemala alone were of no avail. On this well-informed basis, the villagers now have asked for North Americans' help. We can effectively express our concern in air mail letters to Presidente Vinicio Cerezo Arevalo, Palacio Nacional, Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Even the moderate, pro-American, non-Communist, Christian Democrat Cerezo government cannot expect American Catholics to be indifferent to the "disappearance" of four more religious workers today. No longer can inattentiveness to soldiers' human-rights abuses be excused, as in the past, by reference to the exigencies of war. Where are Danilo Morales, José Ruiz Ramirez, José Velasquez García, and Mañuel Chin Bosos?

GORDON L. BOWEN

Gordon L. Bowen wrote "No Roadblocks to Death: Guatemala's War Against the Church" in the June 15, 1984, issue of Commonweal, *as well as other reports on Guatemala. He teaches political science at Mary Baldwin College.*

WITH ROBERTSON IN IOWA

FAITHFUL ON THE MOVE

THE GOP WON'T BE THE SAME

Chanting "Go for it, Pat!" with his fellow Robertson supporters as they crowded into the Iowa State University basketball arena, Chuck Hurley found himself shoulder to shoulder with the George Bush contingent. He could see that the Bush people were affluent, well-dressed . . . and were snickering at him and his comrades. As the arena filled, it became apparent that the Robertson forces, plainly identifiable in the white tee shirts handed out by their organizers, outnumbered the partisans of any of the rival candidates. The mass of white shirts guaranteed that Robertson would win the straw poll, one of the key tests of the Republican political season leading to the February 8 Iowa caucuses.

"They started looking at each other with a sort of amazed look on their faces." Hurley recalls. "After a while they came to realize what was going on — the numbers — and it shocked them." The numbers at the straw poll at Ames, Iowa on September 12 shocked many political observers: of the 3,843 Iowa Republicans voting, Robertson received 1,293 votes, or 34 percent, Kansas Senator Bob Dole got about 25 percent, George Bush 22 percent, with the rest of the field finishing well back. As they witnessed the dimension of their defeat, the Bush people sat bolt upright with a look that said, "What right do these people have to be here?"

So goes the nasty battle for the soul of the Republican party in the two earliest states in the Republican cycle, Michigan, which elects the first group of delegates to the national convention on January 30, and Iowa. A Robertson-Kemp coalition seized control of the Michigan state central committee last February and then, by procedural fiat, disqualified many likely Bush delegates to the state convention. The Michigan GOP establishment filed a suit to overturn the central committee's decree and won a court decision on December 4. Robertson forces were expected to appeal. Robertson has predicted that ultimately he'll win about forty-five of the seventy-seven delegates to the national convention from Michigan.

The bitterness of the Michigan battle has bubbled over into Iowa. The Iowa Republican establishment fears the hijacking of its party by single-issue fanatics. Iowa Republicans have traditionally been of the moderate, fiscally responsible vari-

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ety. The party has room in its ranks for Congressman Jim Leach, an advocate of a nuclear test ban and a staunch opponent of aid to the *contras*. Its most popular statesman is Senator Chuck Grassley, best know for his denunciations of Pentagon waste. But demographics don't favor the GOP. With a net decline of sixty-thousand in the state's population since 1980, State Chairman Mike Mahaffey notes that Iowa's young people are leaving the state because so few jobs can be found. Mahaffey says sadly: "Many of them were young people who would have tended to be Republicans" — especially go-getter entrepreneurs of the Reagan-Kemp persuasion. Iowans have gone Republican in eight of the last nine presidential elections, but Reagan's winning percentage in 1984 in Iowa was only 53 percent. Mahaffey worries that this year the Democrats will carry the state. The demographics show why the party should welcome the influx of Robertson voters, say the evangelist's supporters.

Instead, the *Des Moines Register* splashes across its op-ed pages the question: "Will religious fundamentalism destroy the Republican party?" The *Register* gives former Republican National Chairman and veteran Iowa Republican Mary Louise Smith two pages to answer in the affirmative. The fundamentalists, laments Smith, "see the party only as a means to an end. They don't understand this concept of coalition. There is no idea of the greater good of the party. . . . " If they are not stopped, Smith warns, the party will self-destruct.

The Robertson foot soldiers argue that, on the contrary, they are broadening the base of the party to include disaffected Democrats and the previously apolitical. Says Marshall County organizer Paul Gassman, "Pat will have a very broad appeal to moderates and Democrats. I hear story after story of Democrats who are supporting him and are switching their registration to Republican so they can vote for him in the caucuses and perhaps switch back afterwards." Exactly to the point, say establishment Republicans, who charge that the Robertson zealots are not and never will be the kind of real Republicans who vote loyally for the GOP in state and local contests year after year. Des Moines County GOP chairman Kaytee Davis attended a recent Robertson rally on her home turf, West Burlington. Of the two-hundred and fifty people there, she knew only six. Davis gripes that the local Robertson coordinator is a registered Democrat.

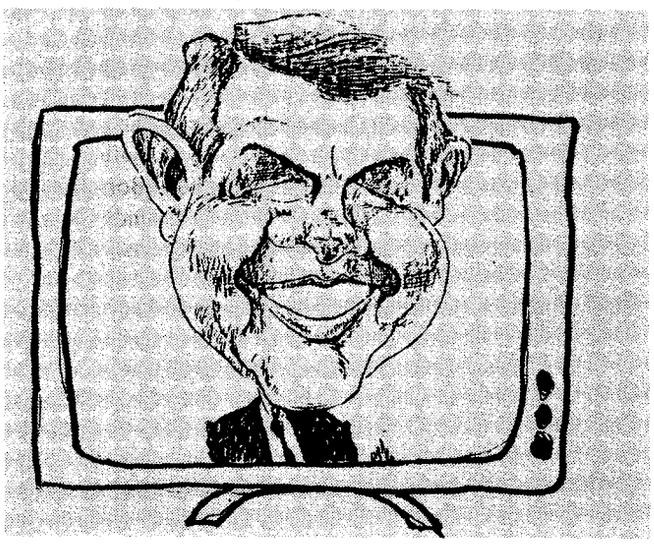
Although many of the Robertson foot soldiers are evangelical Christians taking part in their first political campaign, the Robertson strategists have been at pains to make the preacher more palatable to the electorate by de-emphasizing his religious background. For some Iowa evangelicals, the camouflaging of Robertson's religious roots has succeeded too well. "He's abandoning the people who've worked hardest to get him this far," complains Rev. Ray Block of Webster City, noting that Robertson advance men have been "very belligerent" in insisting that campaign events not be held at Block's church, for fear of identifying Robertson with the evangelicals.

But most of the evangelicals are devotedly working for Robertson, learning the skills of door-to-door canvassing and telephone persuasion like Chuck Hurley, a lawyer who organizes for Robertson in northeast Iowa. In recruiting supporters, Hurley looks for people who share the same views: "people who love kids, love the family." His wife Chris chooses to stay home and raise five children; her car carries the bumper sticker "Motherhood: A Proud Profession." She expertly dissects the inequities of the tax system: a $1440 child-care tax credit — but only for mothers who leave their children and go out to work; a deduction for two-earner married couples but none for husbands who support their wives who stay at home to care for the kids; the measly $1080 dependent deduction that would be five or six thousand if it had kept up with inflation.

The Robertson activists will tell you that if the traditional family is to be saved the public schools must be a battleground. They rail against history books that give space to feminism but don't explain Who the Pilgrims were thanking on Thanksgiving. Among the biggest applause lines in Robertson's stump speech are his denunciation of new-fangled teaching methods (simulation games, values clarification) and his call for a return to teaching reading by the phonics method: not precisely the stuff of a national campaign, but Robertson gives the faithful the promise of transforming the quirky local agenda into a national one.

As expected, the Robertson faithful disdain establishment Republicans who soft-pedal the abortion issue. At the 1984 Iowa Republican state convention, recalls Chuck Hurley, Mary Louise Smith got up and said "We've got to get rid of this issue — it's splitting the party!" Sure, says Hurley sarcastically, we had to get rid of the slavery issue in 1854. "You don't just sweep something like that under the rug — it's too close to our hearts."

What the visiting reporter does not expect is the passion in the voices of Robertson supporters when they talk about groundwater being contaminated by fertilizers and herbicides. "We can not afford to trash our groundwater," says Hurley. "Oil we can live without, but water we can't." Perversely, the federal agriculture programs that pay farmers to take land out of production encourage them to more intensive chemical use



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on the land still in production. Robertson has made no statements about the issue. But no matter: a thoroughgoing pro-life, pro-family insurgency — with a touch of environmentalism and populism thrown in — is stirring in the Iowa GOP. The newly-enrolled Robertson activists talk eagerly about unseating arch-liberal Senator Tom Harkin; some, like Chuck Hurley, plan to run for the state legislature.

A permanent Robertson infrastructure is being built in the Midwest. Having mastered the details of canvassing and dominating the caucuses, most of the Robertson initiates will work in the party in the years ahead. That, more than the procedural guerrilla warfare, is the real significance of this season's Republican race in Iowa. Thanks to the Robertson grass-roots soldiers, the party won't be the same again.

TOM CURRY

Tom Curry is a reporter/researcher with Time *magazine.*

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

THE HIGHER LAW

BORK, BURKE, & MORAL RELATIVISM

Time will tell, but my guess is that when the Democrats in the U.S. Senate beat Robert Bork, they achieved at best a Pyrrhic victory; the party won't be able to stand many more triumphs won at such cost. There were, of course, honest persons of intelligence and good will who opposed Bork's elevation to the Supreme Court; but it was not such who persuaded the Senate Democrats to defeat Bork. The nominee was done in by what President Reagan (who is so rarely correct nowadays) correctly called a lynch mob — an ideological lynch mob that did not recoil from gross misrepresentation of their victim's thought and record.

What is especially disturbing was the anti-intellectual character of the Bork rejection. Had Bork been less intellectual in his approach to the law, or had he disguised his intellectualism by abstaining from publication of his more venturesome speculations, he might have passed muster. In the last analysis, he was punished because he had been faithful to the intellectual calling — a calling that often requires its votaries to play dangerous games with risky ideas. At a moment when many Americans are at long last waking up to the proposition that the national culture is suffering from too much sentimentality and too little intelligence, it was distressing to find liberals, who were once clearly the more enlightened end of the political spectrum, complaining that Bork had an excess of rationality and a deficiency of "heart."

None of this is to say that I approve of the results of Bork's philosophizing; for I do not. But one of the odd aspects of the nomination debate was that liberals and conservatives were so preoccupied with the decisions they believed him likely to make had he parachuted safely onto the Court — liberals dreading those decisions, conservatives hungering and thirsting for them — that neither side gave any real attention to the deeper meaning of Bork's legal philosophy.

The fundamental fact about Bork the philosopher is that he is a legal positivist. That is to say, he rejects the notion that the laws of the land derive from some "higher law" — what Jefferson in the Declaration spoke of as "the laws of Nature and of Nature's God." Instead, Bork holds that the ultimate authority for law comes from the will of the lawmaker, i.e., the people, acting across the years and centuries through their elected representatives.

Bork tells us he is a disciple of Edmund Burke. But this is not quite correct; despite the similarity in names, Bork is no Burke. For Burke, as for Bork, prescription — that is to say, the established laws, customs, even prejudices of a society — has great authority. But for Burke, prescription is ultimately justified by being grounded in the higher law. Not so for Bork, for whom prescription itself is the highest law.

Few have noted the ironic fact that many of Bork's most ardent supporters hold a philosophy totally at odds with their hero's legal positivism. Consider, for instance, Bork and the anti-abortion movement. The nominee denounced *Roe v. Wade* because he thinks the decision was based on a faulty reading of the U.S. Constitution. Pro-lifers, by contrast, consider *Roe v. Wade* wrong because abortion violates the higher law; for them the question of whether or not the decision happens to be good constitutional law is a decidedly secondary issue.

In other words, anti-abortionists did not notice that Bork, while he might eventually have sided with them on abortion questions, would at the same time have undermined their higher law philosophy. Further, he might not even have taken their side on abortion; his respect for prescription may have compelled him to accept abortion now that it is deeply rooted in America's law, custom, and prejudice.

You would think, then, that Bork's liberal opponents, who hit him with everything but the kitchen sink, would have seized the philosophical high ground and attacked him as an enemy of the higher law. But, with one very notable exception, they did nothing of the kind. The reason they did not is that they are no great believers in higher law themselves. If conservatives, many of whom hold a religious worldview, tend to be moral absolutists, liberals, many of whom hold a secularist worldview, tend to be moral relativists. As such, they are skeptical about the existence of a higher law. If they grant its existence, they reduce it to a very slight content, too slight to be of much use in beating Bork about the head and shoulders.

The notable exception just mentioned was Senator Joseph Biden (who, if the

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Dukakis campaign had not had the foresight to shoot him down on the eve of the Bork hearings, would by now have become one of the leading contenders for the Democratic nomination for president, so effectively did he conduct the hearings, and with so much charm). Biden repeatedly made the point that, according to Bork, positive law precedes the rights of the citizen, not vice versa. By contrast, Biden argued, the view that is both more correct and more traditionally American is that rights are not "man-made." The U.S. Constitution declares and protects pre-existing rights. It does not create them. Granted, this is a thin and one-sided theory of natural law, stressing rights and ignoring duties; but that's a shortcoming Biden shares with Jefferson. Granted, too, Biden's intuitive grasp of higher law reveals to him a generalized right of privacy (including above all the right to an abortion), something those of us with weaker intuitive powers have not been privileged to discern. Still, Biden deserves credit for having been almost the only person to raise the higher law issue.

It is ironical that Bork's positivism follows logically from the moral relativism promoted by the culture of liberalism for the past twenty years or so. If there is no higher law, if right and wrong are largely matters of personal preference, then there is no philosophically respectable alternative to some form of legal positivism. Despite his temperamental conservatism, Robert Bork is the logical outcome of the liberal revolution in moral thinking that has swept America during the last third of the twentieth-century. He is the illegitimate child of contemporary American liberalism; yet when he came unto his own, his own received him not.

Mother was right about my Permanent Record

These weeds are memories of those worser hours, I prithee put them off.

Cordelia, in *King Lear*

"How many of us would like to have everything we did when we were younger put on the books?"
President Reagan, defending Douglas H. Ginsburg, erstwhile nominee to the Supreme Court.

Thanks to my Mom, my life is an open book. I am certainly glad I listened to her when she warned me never to try marijuana, the weed with roots in hell. "You'll get caught, and it will end up on your permanent record."

My mother always had a firm belief in The Permanent Record. When my first grade teacher, Mrs. Walsh, complained that I made wisecracks during air raid drills, Mom feared that Mrs. Walsh might put on my Permanent Record that I wasn't college material.

Not that this danger was always used to frighten me. Overall, Mom clearly felt that her son was putting together a pretty impressive Permanent Record. When, as graduate students, my wife and I finally found a decent place to live near Harvard Square, Mom discouraged us from breaking the lease on our wretched apartment.

"You know, Bob, you're the kind of guy someone is going to write a book about. And you don't want it written that you were the kind of guy who broke his lease."

Well, I regret to say that I rejected Mom's sound advice; I hope my youthful indiscretion won't come back to haunt me. You have to remember that the sixties were crazy times, when young people didn't always listen to their parents.

I also regret to say that no one has yet written about me except me. But if anyone — a biographer or an FBI agent — does write about me, he or she will find that my mistake in breaking the lease was a rare lapse from a very high standard. An anecdote shows exactly what kind of guy I was.

One October evening in 1970 we had a housewarming party, to celebrate finding that new place to live. It was a typical Cambridge pad. Seedy furniture. Books by Franz Fanon, Camus, Eldridge Cleaver, Tolkein, Allen Ginsburg, et al. Posters of Ho Chi Minh, Bonnie and Clyde, and W.C. Fields. Our prize possession, a KLH 320, was playing our generation's permanent records: *Sergeant Pepper, Let It Bleed, Crosby Stills and Nash, Blonde on Blonde.*

Bill Bennett was arguing that Paul was barefoot on the cover of *Abbey Road* because that was a Jain burial custom. A bearded law student greeted me, "Hey man, have a hit off of this."

Because I was such a hip-looking dude in my engineer boots, work shirt, and Mao cap, people were always offering me mind-altering contraband substances. "No thanks, Doug," I replied.

"C'mon, man. Remember what the dormouse said. Feed your head!"

"Thanks anyway, Doug," I insisted, "I wouldn't want it to wind up on my permanent record."

Everybody but Bill Bennett burst out laughing. Then Doug got serious. "In twenty years people in this room will all be in powerful positions: prosecuting attorneys, DA's, even Supreme Court Justices. Then grass will be legal. People will joke about marijuana laws the way we joke about Prohibition."

"You're probably right, Doug. Those old folks have some pretty strange ideas. My grandmother believes that if you sleep around, you'll die of some dread disease!"

ROBERT H. BELL

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IT'S COMING ON CHRISTMAS

SCHLOCK & THE INCARNATION

PETER A. QUINN

I was twenty when I decided Christmas was an irredeemable cliché. Every year the same evergreen optimism gave rise to the same expectations and excitement. Every year the same tinselly hopes were tossed out with the tree. By the time January slouched in, all the gadgets were broken or on the blink, all the silly, repetitious music blended into one long echoing drone, *You better watch out, o little town of Bethlehem, the red-nosed reindeer are roasting on an open fire and Jack Frost's nipping at your silent night.*

I can date my epiphany about Christmas with some precision. On the back cover of my medieval history textbook, among phone numbers and the name of a girl I was trying to summon the courage to call, is this: "12/17/67; O God, is there any more dreadful time of the year?"

In those days iconoclasm came easy. It wasn't hard to build a consensus against the gift-mongering of the yule-ing classes. The horror of it: An overweight Northern European businessman who exploited midgets and whipped flying reindeer, the world's most endangered species, into pulling his sled across the heavens. First-world imperialism at its worst.

Time softened my college views somewhat. But as the fires of radicalism died down and I cast a cold eye on Christmas, I decided my initial revulsion wasn't all that misplaced. It seemed obvious to me that Christmas came but once a year because the country couldn't handle hangovers of such ferocity and duration without endangering its military and economic security.

Certainly, Christmas was the most wonderful time of the year; that is, if you were a manufacturer of high-tech corkscrews or the purveyor of overpriced perfume, tacky ties, or stale fruit cake.

T'was the season to be jolly if your powers of self-delusion were such that you could believe this annual recitation of every clichábout joy, goodwill, and world peace had anything to do with life as lived in the last sorrowful decades of the twentieth century.

PETER A. QUINN, *a former speech writer for Hugh Carey and Mario Cuomo, is an assistant to the president of* Time *Incorporated.*

Worst of all, I understood Christmas was inescapable. Love it or loathe it, but unless you were willing to book accommodations in Mecca or Teheran, you couldn't leave it. It wouldn't be ignored. Like Willy Loman's wife, it would demand, "Attention must be paid."

It was. Even in my days as a lapsed Catholic, I still went to midnight Mass. I told myself it was a harmless concession to the habits of childhood, a ritual bow to the faith of my ancestors. I need not have worried. Invariably, I left with my agnosticism reconfirmed and renewed. The sermon was so awful, so trite and repetitious, the ceremony so long, the church so overheated (the energy crisis notwithstanding), the air so choked with the aroma of incense and alcohol (I made my own contribution to the latter), that I reveled in my escape to the secular cold of the December night.

When I later found myself drawn back to the church it had nothing to do with putting Christ back in Xmas. As far as I was concerned, the Puritans were right. Christmas was paganism masking as Christianity, and nothing would be lost by giving it back. *Have yourselves a very merry saturnalia.* Let the neopagans have their sacred trees and boughs of holly, the vestiges of the crudest sort of animism. At the end of the Christmas octave, let them gather in the valley of Times Square and try to coax a spherical replica of the sun back to earth. My sentiments were contained in a refrain from a Joni Mitchell song: "It's coming on Christmas/They're cutting down trees/They're putting up reindeer/And singing songs of joy and peace/I wish I had a river/I could skate away on."

When I returned to Catholicism it was to the stark, real, powerful events of Holy Week, the doubts, betrayal, and pain of the Passion, the existential drama of the Days of Awe, the terrible beauty of the cross and the empty tomb. But Christmas pursued me down the labyrinthine ways.

I got married and our first Christmas together my wife and I argued over whether to get a tree.

"It would just be for us," I said. "It would be wasted."

She struggled to control herself, "Wasted?" she asked, and

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the word rang with savage indignation.

We got the tree. We decorated it. I kept my opinions to myself. *Damn Donder, damn Blitzen, damn all these empty clichés* when all that lies ahead is the killing emptiness of ordinary time.

Then, in my thirty-ninth year, came Genevieve.

The worst cliché of all! Star-struck father gets a first glimpse of his squealing daughter. Newborn, she is taken from her mother and handed to a nurse who washes and swaddles her and then puts her in her father's arms. Holy St. Joseph, as soon as she gets there she stops crying and her father becomes a weeping fool. It's September but a snatch of music keeps running through his head. *A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices.*

If this were TV, the next scene would be just as melodramatic. *"Scrooge Revisited," brought to you by the United States Christmas Corporation.* Genevieve's old man skips through the snow in his Santa Claus costume, goose in one hand, the tree on his back, the other hand trailing a great sack of presents. Mother and daughter wave gaily at father from behind the frosted windowpanes. *And now a word from our sponsor.*

Since this is real life, it's not quite that bad. I still have serious reservations. I still hate almost every piece of Christmas music, secular or religious (except for the wonderfully dolorous "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"). I still resent the commercialism and the phony good cheer and the molded plastic junk retailing at $59.95. I still dread the trial of winter that the post-Christmas letdown only succeeds in making drearier and more painful.

And yet, well, maybe for the first time I have a fuller sense of the implications of the Incarnation. Maybe having been a witness to the process of childbirth, to the suffering my wife endured, I feel a new measure of understanding for the particulars of the narrative of Jesus' birth, however apocryphal they might be.

Perhaps I grasp now what I didn't before: how an infant can change the world, landing in the midst of our carefully delineated plans and reconfiguring the landscape; how, instead of being confining or constricting, a baby presents us with an invitation to let go, to love without reservation, to open ourselves right into the frozen center of our existence, slipping past all the fortifications around our hearts, embracing all the pain and possibility of another life.

Last year, for the first time I can remember, I looked carefully at a crèche. Seeing with the eyes of a new father, I was struck by the ridiculous size of the infant Jesus. He was ready for kindergarten. Joseph and Mary looked as if they had just come from a wedding feast at the Bethlehem Hilton instead of the shared ordeal of childbirth.

As with so much of Christmas, everything was unreal. But everything was there: the infinite potential of God's love; the challenge of his presence in the world; the utter inclusiveness of the Incarnation: women, men, Jews, gentiles, black, white, yellow, ox, ass, everything.

For Genevieve's first Christmas, I managed to put on a fairly convincing charade. I went without even a murmur of dissent to get the tree. I managed to do a little shopping without being overcome by that familiar wave of paralyzing exhaustion. I ate, drank, and was merry, and tried not to think too much about grim, bleak, harsh January.

This year, I'm doing even better. The clichés seem less offensive, the music a bit less grating, the festivities less hollow. I guess I'm just mellowing. Or maybe there's something to Christmas after all. Who knows? In any case, *Have yourself a very merry Christmas, because Santa Claus is coming to hark the herald angels, and to all a good night!*

Anne Porter

La Bella Notizia

We're at the winter solstice
With its long nights
Wars are still not over
Weapons are heaped on weapons
Terror is hoarded like grain
Those who have no houses
Are sleeping out on the street
Scorched by the burning cold
And children are learning to starve
Before they learn to speak.

But this December night
Is like no other night
Angels blaze in the pasture
And all the sheep are kneeling
The brambles have thrown open
Their sweet-smelling flowers
While somewhere back in the hills
All the cocks are crowing
And there are brooks of torchlight
Streaming down the hillside
Where the shepherds are.

I'll try to catch up with the shepherds
As they go out searching
For that holy Child
Who's offering us his peace
Who out of love for us
Has chosen to be born
Of a young poor woman
In a cattle-shed.

Swaddled in strips
Of a torn shirt
Just as the angel told us
He shines in the dark valley.

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RUBEN ZAMORA: POLITICS & BELIEF

AN INTERVIEW FROM EL SALVADOR

GENE PALUMBO

Rubén Zamora is the forty-five-year-old vice-president of the Salvadoran Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), the civilian political grouping that is allied to the guerrilla Farabundo Martí National Liberation Movement (FMLN). Once a Christian Democrat and associate of El Salvador's President Duarte, as well as chairman of the social and political science department at the University of El Salvador, Zamora went into exile shortly after an older brother was killed by a death squad in 1980. Zamora founded a left-wing Christian group, the Popular Social Christian Movement, which he heads today, and with other members of the FDR, he entered the alliance with the FMLN.

In late November, Zamora returned to El Salvador in the wake of the Arias plan. He spoke publicly in favor of a non-military resolution to the Salvadoran conflict and urged a "pluralism for all" that would allow an open political role for forces to the left of the Christian Democrats. Zamora's message combined strong criticism of the Duarte government for incompetence and subservience to the Salvadoran military and the U.S. with themes departing from the orthodox Marxist thinking in the FMLN. Many observers saw in his eleven-day visit, undertaken despite the danger of assassination, a potential way out of the Salvadoran stalemate.

Gene Palumbo interviewed Rubén Zamora in El Salvador on December 1. A free-lance journalist based in El Salvador, Gene Palumbo has reported for National Public Radio, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, BBC, and the *National Catholic Reporter*. THE EDITORS

PALUMBO: Do you think the army, the government, and the FMLN, share your belief in pluralism?

ZAMORA: The pluralism I was advancing is not shared by the army, which sees itself as the maker of the country. The army is very reluctant to open up the society to a wider expression of views and tendencies. As for the government, it does not have real decision-making power. But in the FMLN, I see a tendency toward a more open attitude. Yet important ideological elements there are not very open to advancing pluralism.

Pluralism or democracy doesn't come out of the blue. Pluralism is the result of a balance of forces in society. If you could maintain this balance of forces for a period of time, democratic culture or a culture of pluralism would arise in El Salvador. But if we end up with a level of polarization, or with only a single strong political force, then the chances of pluralism are very slim.

PALUMBO: If the army and elements in the FMLN are not ready to accept pluralism, then how can they be persuaded or compelled to do so?

ZAMORA: The only way to convince them, especially the army, is with realities. Ten years ago it was inconceivable that the political party in power would not be a party set up by the military. That has been our tradition since 1932. Now, although the army is more powerful than the Christian Democrats, we cannot say that the Christian Democrats are the party of the Salvadoran armed forces. Why? Did the army become convinced of the need to separate itself from the political parties and the government? No. It happened because reality imposed it. When the military saw that they had no alternative, they accepted that reality. If we are able to develop strong political forces, we are going to have pluralism in El Salvador. If not, it doesn't matter how many speeches you make, how many good ideas you have, there is not going to be pluralism.

PALUMBO: Do you believe it will be possible to develop those kinds of forces?

ZAMORA: We have certain factors in our favor. For instance, a tradition of opposition political parties has developed, even during the period of military dictatorship. We have a stronger interplay of political forces and parties than we once did. Another important factor: the political-military organizations (FDR-FMLN) are not just military organizations. The FMLN started with mass political organizations. Their military strength developed from there. They have not lost their social base and their political organizing capacity. In that sense, pluralism doesn't mean that if the war ends, the FMLN are finished. To continue the struggle at the political level is a real possibility.

PALUMBO: Do you think there is any way to measure how much potential strength there is for the FDR-FMLN? For example, on Jannuary 22, 1980, hundreds of thousands of people were

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in the streets. Those numbers are not in the streets now.

ZAMORA: The only way of assessing that question is by negative indicators, not positive ones. For instance, how is it that in spite of all the U.S. military aid; in spite of the growth of the Salvadoran army, which has quadrupled in the last seven years; and in spite of the fact that in this country there are no jungles, no isolated places, how is it possible that the FMLN has not only survived but has developed over the years? The FMLN is militarily stronger today than in 1981 when they launched the general offensive. The only explanation lies in basic popular support. How large this support is, or how much this support would be manifested in political activities—elections or demonstrations—will depend on other factors, especially whether political life is opened or remains closed. As for the FDR, and more specifically for our political parties, during this visit I have seen contradictory factors: the desire for participation or expression, and the fear of participation. For instance, when we were invited by the Catholic University to speak, the whole room was really packed with people, and they were very supportive. You could see that in the applause, in the attention of the people— the sympathy that was there. But two days later, we invited the political parties to a meeting. Basically only our own militants were present. This is a good indication of how things stand here: people are willing to hear new ideas, to accept new ideas, but they are still afraid to participate, to make a personal commitment to those new ideas.

PALUMBO: It is charged that the United States has been too dominant here. Given geopolitical realities, do you think the United States can take a neutral stance?

ZAMORA: No. Whether the United States has a Republican or Democratic administration, it is not going to be indifferent to what happens in El Salvador, and for a simple reason: the world has been divided into spheres of influence, due to the confrontation between the East and the West. That has geopolitical consequences, whether we like it or not. The United States will look at anything in Central America as a possible threat to its own national interest. We need to construct a coalition of forces that will be able to enter into a real discussion with the United States in order to regain a greater level of national independence. This won't happen overnight. It's a process. What is encouraging is that this is a process developing throughout Latin America.

PALUMBO: A recent *New York Times* report refers to the FDR-FMLN alliance as increasingly tense. Is it tense?

ZAMORA: The alliance between the FDR and FMLN is based on the recognition that they represent two different fronts. The FDR is a political organization and the FMLN is an armed organization. Both agree on a basic understanding of the Salvadoran reality, and a basic design for overcoming that situation. What is the state of the alliance? It is not tense. On the contrary, for the last year each side has felt less tense because we have reached a clearer understanding of what each has to do. On the other hand, because the FDR political parties have decided to develop an open political presence in the country, relations between the two fronts have to be modified. In these new circumstances it will, as always, take trial and error to see how the alliance can be developed.

PALUMBO: Your intellectual and religious formation came at the time of Vatican II and Medellin. Do you see your religious beliefs as part of the reason for deciding on a career in politics?

ZAMORA: Oh yes. The strongest personal motivation for me to enter and to stay in politics came from my religious beliefs. I come from a very Catholic family, a practicing Catholic family. I discovered politics through activity associated with a religious task. Catholic Action was a very defining experience. We operated with the idea of commitment and in El Salvador commitment very easily and very rapidly becomes politics. Still, I consider that as a person my main motivation for being in politics is because I am a believer.

But it is very difficult to articulate these personal processes. You don't know at what moment you really started. First, I was in a very traditional seminary. I left the seminary when I was nineteen. I remained close to the church, and in my local parish the priest started some cooperatives. If the peasants got

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together, it would be easier for them to buy fertilizer and tools at cheaper prices. That was my first real social contact with peasants. We started with the idea that a Catholic has to give something to the people, especially to the poor. It was a paternalistic attitude. But the National Guard saw such efforts as a Communist attempt to organize peasants. At first we reacted in a very conciliatory way, trying to convince the National Guard that we were not Communists, we were Catholics. We would even say, look, this is the real way to fight against Communism, to better the standard of living of the peasants. This was not something we told the National Guard as a trick; no, this was what I believed at the time. I was very anti-Communist. But the Guard didn't understand. They continued trying to destroy the cooperatives. And in that way, we started to discover politics, to discover that behind our humanitarian effort there was a political power problem. We were touching the power structure that had existed in El Salvador so many years. We joined a political party. And of course it was not the official political party, it was the opposition political party, the Christian Democratic party. We saw it as a means to make some noise about what the National Guard was doing to the peasants. And once you are inside a political party, you begin to develop other political activities. Later on, especially when I left the country and went to Europe to study, I came to have a more intellectual understanding of society, a more scientific approach to the problem. But I have always valued the fact that I discovered politics first as a personal experience and afterwards as an intellectual experience.

PALUMBO: Talking about the intellectual part of your development, was the Medellin document eye-opening for you?

ZAMORA: Medellin was one of the most exciting things that happened inside the church. For us, at the grassroots level, it was even more exciting than Vatican II. I cannot imagine Medellin without the council but the council was something happening in Europe which we didn't understand very well. Medellin was more of a concentrated fact that hit us immediately. Immediately after Medellin, in the parish we started to organize meetings with peasants, with people in the town, to study what Medellin was saying. Sometimes our efforts were really funny. For instance, on May 1 there was usually a demonstration only by left-wing people. But in terms of Medellin you have to be with the people, so someone came up with the idea of having a procession for St. Joseph, because St. Joseph was a worker, a carpenter. We carried the image of St. Joseph around the town and with it a sort of placard stating the demands of the people. That was a way for people to raise their consciousness. In El Salvador the massacre of 1932 [fifteen to thirty thousand deaths in putting down a peasant uprising—The Editors] was so terrible that it put up a wall to political ideas in the minds of the peasants. With all the new theology, with Medellin, and so on, that wall started to be destroyed. People began to see they could move toward an active political position without abandoning their religious beliefs.

PALUMBO: You say that when you began, your approach with the cooperatives was humanitarian or ameliorative. Later, would you say that your approach changed, toward a concern with development or liberation, and were you also able to have a new understanding of your faith, one that correlated with your political work?

ZAMORA: That's why Catholic Action was so important. We received a theological, a religious formation that allowed us to go with our political work. I suppose that if we had only gotten the political involvement, I would be an atheist. I would see too many contradictions with traditional theology or religious formation. Insofar as we were able to keep together political activity and a religious understanding, which was deeper, closer to reality, there was no dilemma. Of course, other people abandoned the faith. But in my case that formation helped me a lot.

PALUMBO: Many people have pointed to a trajectory: Someone begins, let's say, as a catechist or a "delegate of the word," and they begin to see the implications of that, and then the next thing you know they're in a mass political organization, and then they reach a point where they say to themselves "not enough," and then they go on, as part of their faith, to join a military group. They see it as part of their faith. Have you seen that kind of trajectory take place?

ZAMORA: I saw many cases of that. I kept contact with the people with whom we started the cooperatives. I saw many of those people going from humanitarian work into political work, for instance, joining the Christian Democratic party, participating in elections, then getting angry about the repression, the voting fraud, losing any confidence in the electoral process, and radicalizing themselves. I sometimes feel myself torn, telling myself okay, now I am a lecturer at the university, so I stay in the Christian Democratic party. Those other people, who are peasants, who are suffering more than I suffer, are moving to other options. In the end, they become members of left-wing organizations and I suppose now some of them are guerrillas. That was a dynamic process. During a certain period there was a lot of conflict inside the church because of this problem. Political options started to become polarized inside the progressive Catholic movement. Sometimes that drew us into conflict. If you take such a decision, are you more authentic? Now when I look back at that period it seems we were making a mistake not being able to distinguish with enough clarity between religious commitment and political option.

That is something that at certain moments you have to do. You destroy your faith if you politicize it completely. The temptation to manipulate your faith for politics is great. In that period it was very difficult for us to try to determine the limits of religious commitment and political option. Maybe now we have a more mature attitude. But at the beginning of the seventies it was a very difficult situation.

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RESURRECTING THE COMMON GOOD

THE ECONOMICS PASTORAL, A YEAR LATER — I

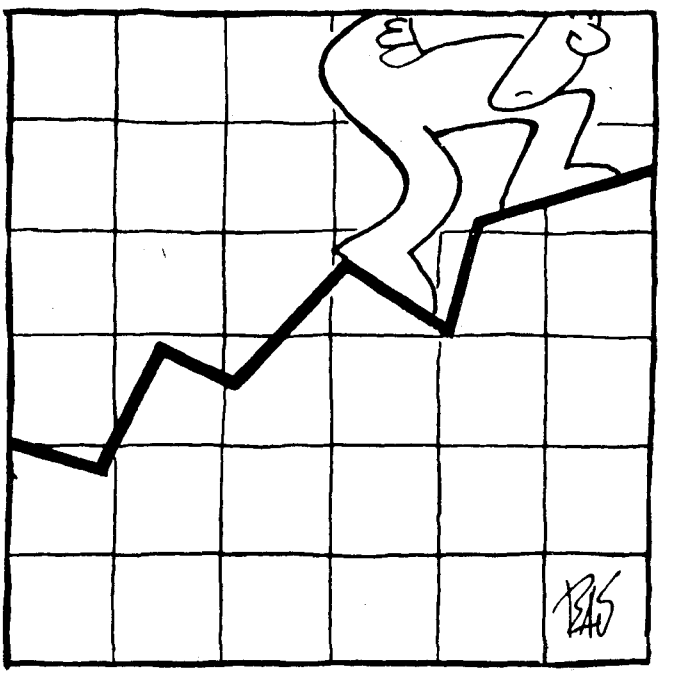
ROBERT N. BELLAH

The bishops' letter, *Economic Justice for All*, is, I believe, a manifestation of Christ to us in the midst of our economic life today. Indeed, it is a kind of extended commentary on the greatest of Jesus' sermons, the Sermon on the Mount, and more specifically on its first sentence, the first Beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Yet for all the flamboyant piety in America today, exhibited from the president on down, biblical language is not well understood. It is one of our tasks in teaching the letter to make that language come alive again today.

In an article in *Commonweal* last year [December 5, 1986], R. Bruce Douglass and William J. Gould ask the question why the economic pastoral has not yet received the serious and widespread discussion for which the bishops hoped. Their first answer is that the letter goes against the mood of the country. "The particular line the letter takes," they say, is something which "the majority of Americans would rather not hear right now." We are worried about efficiency and competition and are "simply not receptive to considerations of justice, much less of charity." But, according to them, the real reason why Americans would prefer to ignore the letter is that most of us believe that "economic life is an autonomous realm which, for the most part, should be allowed to run on its own, without interference from external influences — like religion." And we are not eager to be told differently by anybody.

If these writers are correct, and I believe they are, then the economic pastoral is more radical than we might have imagined, not in the political sense, but in the sense of going to the root of our problems. After all, the tone of the letter is mild, some would say, too mild. It is not a frontal attack on American culture or the American economy, or does not seem to be. Yet for many Americans it comes as bad news not good news. Could it be that for most Americans, in spite of our apparent piety, the Sermon on the Mount, if we really faced it, is not particularly good news and if Jesus were talking to us directly today we would rather not hear him?

Actually, the idea that what we need today is more efficiency and enhanced competitiveness rather than a concern for justice or charity is closely linked to the notion that economic life is an autonomous realm that should operate without so-called outside interference. These beliefs are part of one of the most persistent systems of dogma in the modern world, and I use the word dogma in its pejorative sense, namely, a belief that persists in the face of massive empirical evidence to the contrary. This notion that human beings are essentially economic self-interest maximizers, the idea of so-called "economic man," which came into existence simultaneously with the birth of capitalism, rivals if not surpasses Marxism (which incidentally is finally only a variant of it) in its capacity to ignore historical reality.



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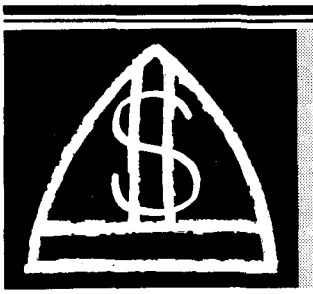
This dogma, or to use another word in its pejorative sense, ideology, of economic man was associated at its birth with a radical individualism that rejected the very notion of the common good. Already in the seventeenth century Hobbes rejected the idea that there is any Good in itself. All there are, he said, are the particular goods of individuals. By the eighteenth century this idea that man is essentially an economic actor, concerned only with his own good, had developed the essential ideology of capitalism. Mandeville expressed it in the idea that private vice produces public good. Adam Smith spoke of an "invisible hand" that would produce general benevolence if each pursued his own self-interest, although Adam Smith, as we will see, still retained a residual commitment to older views. By the early nineteenth century, however, when this ideology reached its purest form of expression (until Milton Friedman), the free market was elevated into some kind of untouchable holy grail, which should be devoid of the slightest interference. It is interesting that something that its supporters believed was essentially natural required ruthless action by the state so that it might have full freedom. What ultimately resulted was the most productive economy in human history, but the immediate consequences were everywhere culturally and socially devastating. The sufferings of the rural and urban poor in England, their loss not only of a decent livelihood but the devastation of their communities, their culture, and often their families, was matched somewhat later by experiences of the poor in Europe and America. By the early twentieth century the devastating effects of the extension of the free market had extended to all the peasant and tribal peoples of the world. Karl Polanyi, in his book *The Great Transformation* (Beacon Press, 1957), considers the advent of the market economy to be the most traumatic event in world history, and the cause of the great ideological disturbances, fascism and Communism, and the persecutions and wars that have racked the globe in the twentieth century.

Of course the Milton Friedmans of this world have never had their way for very long. The consequences of the untrammeled market have been too terrible. But the forms of intervention designed to protect the victims of market forces have frequently been problematic, creating new problems as much as solving old ones. The growth of the bureaucratic state and its tendency to extend its control into every aspect of life is a consequence of efforts to contain the human damage created by a market economy. We should not imagine that all of these extensions of state power have been benevolent and concerned with welfare. Many times the state has intervened to strengthen the competitive advantage of its own citizens and corporations. Indeed, imperial expansion to dominate and control markets is a direct consequence of the international market economy.

The persistence of the idea that the economic realm is autonomous and should brook no interference in the face of the last two hundred years of world history is a clear case of false consciousness, of an ideology which is serving the interests of some people more than others. Yet in a culture such as ours, where it is pervasive, it is seldom held in conscious bad faith.



This is one in a series of articles, to appear in Commonweal over the next several months, that will examine different aspects of the U.S. bishops' pastoral.

Rather it has come to shape the way we think so deeply that even when we try to reform the system we are under its spell. What American does not believe somewhere in his or her heart that anyone with self-discipline and hard work can make it and that poverty is essentially the fault of the poor? Such assumptions have not only shaped our welfare system for over two hundred years, they have also shaped our ideas of what a good and successful person is. It is these assumptions that the bishops' letter calls into question. No wonder there is resistance.

The pastoral letter asserts criteria in terms of which the functioning of the economy can be judged. The fundamental norm is stated in paragraph 28: *The dignity of the human person, realized in community with others, is the criterion against which all aspects of economic life must be measured.* What the bishops are saying is that the economy is made for human beings, not human beings for the economy. But contemporary economic ideology is premised on the idea that the world economy is an inexorable, objective mechanism. We must adapt to it, not it to us. If we are not sufficiently competitive it will crush us and we will, heaven forbid, become a second-class nation. In the name of competitiveness we can export factories, lower wages, increase the pressure on professional employees, and forget about justice and charity. And if councils of bishops tell us otherwise, then they are ignorant of the real world and should stick to giving advice on sex and marriage, where they are really experts.

I believe that the economic pastoral raises important practical matters for discussion. But it is useless to start that discussion without facing the more fundamental issue: that the economic realm is not autonomous, that it exists under the sovereignty of God along with all the rest of our lives, and that economic decisions must be made, therefore, in the light of ethical criteria. Indeed what those who dismiss the letter challenge us to do may turn out to be a great blessing. For we cannot engage in the discussion in some narrow forum labeled "economic." We have first to vindicate our right to speak about economics by holding up our most fundamental beliefs about God and the world. The bishops view their letter as a call for conversion (paragraph 328). We will respond best to the letter if we combine spiritual renewal with practical citizenship. By strengthening our sense of who we are as Christians we will increase our capacity for profound vision and forceful action in the economic realm.

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Let us look more closely at the origins of the ideology which prevents us from hearing how the Bible could help us in thinking about our economy today. In Charles Dickens's novel *Hard Times*, the utilitarian schoolmaster Thomas Gradgrind has named two of his numerous children Adam Smith and Malthus. From this we learn the depth of Gradgrind's devotion to the heartless principles of political economy. Yet in the light of the current understanding of late eighteenth-century thought we can say that Dickens was mistaken in subsuming Smith and Malthus under the same rubric. Modern as in some ways Smith was, there was a sea change between *The Wealth of Nations* of 1776 and Malthus's *Essay on Population* of 1798. Gertrude Himmelfarb, in Part One of *The Idea of Poverty* (Knopf, 1983), characterizes the shift as "from moral philosophy to political economy." There is a benign, optimistic, and profoundly moral quality to Adam Smith's notion of the invisible hand that was transformed almost into its opposite in the gloomy amoral scientism of Malthus's iron laws. This contrast is not a matter of merely antiquarian interest. Americans have never decided to this day which way to characterize capitalism or, more generally, economics. As a people we prefer results to philosophical consistency. But how we characterize the nature of the modern economy has important consequences for how we think morally about our society.

Adam Smith's economic views were part of a much larger conception of history which saw society as evolving toward a higher level of material prosperity and moral order. His defense of the free market was based on his belief in the virtues of the "system of natural liberty" that it embodied. Yet much as Smith admired the effectiveness of the self-regarding virtues in contributing to a productive economy, he never imagined that they were superior to the other-regarding virtues. It was, in fact, the effect of the invisible hand (we can almost write hand with a capital "h") to work for the general good. And where the market did not work for the general good Smith had no qualms about intervention by the state. He supported public assistance for the poor, public education, and even believed that should the division of labor reduce work to so narrow a compass as to limit the physical and mental development of workers, here too the state must intervene.

Malthus, on the other hand, worked out views in his theory of population that were later taken up by David Ricardo into classical economics. In this view the market worked in accord with iron laws that were by no means necessarily benevolent or worked for the common good, especially if one took the condition of the poor as an index of the common good, as Adam Smith did. For Malthus and Ricardo grinding poverty was an essential feature of a productive market economy and any effort to intervene on behalf of the poor would not only have disastrous economic consequences but would actually worsen the condition of the poor. Charles Murray's recent *Losing Ground* (Basic Books, 1984) is a footnote to the views of Malthus, Ricardo, and Gradgrind that Dickens condemned. It is widely known that it was Malthus's theory of population that inspired Darwin's theory of natural selection. When in the late-nineteenth century Darwin's biological views were in turn applied to society in the form of social Darwinism, the full weight of biological science, of the notion of nature red in tooth and claw, reinforced the idea that social life was governed by the laws of competition and selection.

On the whole, however, it is the more optimistic view of Adam Smith that Americans have embraced. For a long time we have produced defenders of the market economy, what we call free enterprise, who proclaim that its invisible hand is the most effective means to moral and material progress in the history of the world, and we have numerous supporters of that view today, not least in the religious community. And yet, over two hundred years after Adam Smith's promise of an economy that would be so enormously productive that it would free us from material necessity, the dark shadows of the iron laws have begun to lengthen in America (they have never been absent in most of the world). Don't we have to regain our competitive edge, and doesn't that mean lowering our expectations, tightening our belts, and working longer hours for less pay? Otherwise, the iron laws of international economic competition will consign us to oblivion. Our economic survival is at stake. The Darwinian notes are clear. To the extent that we accept this view the ethical consequences are obvious. If it is a matter of survival, competitiveness is what is at issue. Who has time to think of justice, much less charity?

Joseph Schumpeter characterized capitalism as a system of creative destruction. It is enormously creative in giving rise to new products, new industries, new markets. But in the wake of the new there is the desolating destruction and human cost of what is necessarily destroyed. The destructiveness that has accompanied capitalist creativity has occurred everywhere in the world where the free market has entered. The suffering has been particularly acute in the early phases when land and labor for the first time entered the self-regulating market. Even where material prosperity has increased, the human costs have been enormous because of the disruption of communities and cultures as villages have been emptied, kinship ties broken, and vast urban aggregates have grown. And it was inevitably to government that society turned when it saw its very existence endangered by the growth of the free market. In spite of the bungling and ineptitude of government pointed out by Smith, the classical economists, and their successors to this day, it is to government that even capitalists turned and still turn when the destructive aspect of creative destruction threatens their very existence. Still more have the weak and the vulnerable turned to government as their only hope in a dark world. And so, in spite of the warnings of the economists, bureaucratic government has grown ineluctably as the market economy has expanded.

By the end of the nineteenth century bureaucratic organization was growing massively within the economy itself. Corporate organization was an effort to create order in the face of the

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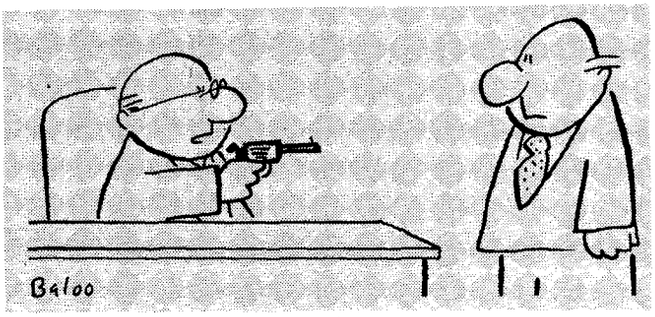
wild oscillations of the free market. At the same time, powerful nation-states acted to defend national interests in an increasingly competitive world-system, with the result that here too the Darwinian model of competition and survival has become widely accepted. Also in reaction to the sufferings caused by the early expansion of the market economy, the ideology of socialism developed as a counterpoise to capitalism and argued, in opposition to the orthodox economists, that a state-directed economy would be more just and humane than what was currently coming into being. But the experience of state-directed economies under the aegis of Marxian Communism has turned out to be so economically inefficient and politically tyrannical that most of the world agrees they are worse than the societies whose defects they were to remedy. Today we have learned that administrative bureaucracies can generate enormous power but that that power can be at least as destructive as the wealth generated by a capitalist economy. And today it is not only the shadows of the necessity of economic competition but the shadows of the competition of the great power states that darken the world.

Everyone knows that there is nowhere in the world either a perfectly free market or a perfectly administered economy. Where free markets are suppressed, they flourish underground. Yet markets everywhere need regulation and limitation or they will destroy the very conditions of their operation. Most policy debates in the United States and abroad, in Europe, Japan, the socialist nations, and even the third world, concern the proper mix of market and state and the mechanisms best calculated to effectively relate them. If the argument goes on in terms of economic and administrative efficiency alone, however, there is something drastically missing. What is missing is what Adam Smith, the moral philosopher, had not given up, namely concern for the common good, for the kind of society in which we live and the kind of virtues it encourages. That often missing third partner in the discussion is not the economy nor the state but the public, in a free society the citizens, who bring their ethical and religious insight to bear in common discussions about the kind of economic and political decisions we ought to make and the kind of world in which we want to live. But the question that must precede any serious effort to reflect ethically about our economic life is whether or not we have the freedom to do so. Is the economy governed by an invisible hand that operates on the whole for good but which requires active and thoughtful intervention when it is destructive? Or is the economy governed by the struggle for existence with its iron laws, which we must blindly follow if we are to survive at all?



"Goodwin, I've decided to dispense with formality in your case."

Much in our present atmosphere pulls us toward the second alternative. There is a widespread mood today among managers as well as economists that could be called neo-Schumpeterian because it stresses creative destruction so strongly. One major American firm is alleged to have adopted the motto: "Accelerate, automate, or evacuate." More formally, Harold Gross and Bernard Weinstein argued in an article in *Policy Studies Journal* (March, 1986) that:

> . . . structural change manifested in the contraction and death of old enterprises and the birth and growth of new ones is compelling evidence of an efficient economy at work. Dislocations of workers and other productive resources that necessarily accompany structural change do not suggest an inefficient economy: quite to the contrary, they should properly be seen as symptoms of an economy experiencing renewal, however painful. The process of industrial change is *de jure* an efficient process. . . .

What the neo-Schumpeterians forget is that Schumpeter himself was profoundly pessimistic about the future of capitalism because he thought the "pain" involved in creative destruction was more than any modern population would bear and so they would opt for a state-directed economy. The defenders of "industrial policy" in our recent debates have been advocating a good bit more state intervention than the neo-Schumpeterians care for, though whether their proposals would be generally ameliorative in our present situation is an open question.

Japan is often offered as a model of a society where industrial policy has had remarkably positive effects, and certainly Japan holds the world's record for sustained economic growth since World War II and even before. Yet if we closely examine the Japanese pattern it turns out to have features that we may not at all wish to imitate. I recently saw an article in the financial section of the *San Francisco Chronicle* that argued that even if all Japanese restraints on trade were eliminated, the trade deficit would hardly be dented because the Japanese excel us in three spheres: their workers work much longer hours; their rate of saving is much higher; and their educational system is much better than ours.

It is true that Japanese workers work two or three hundred hours more a year than American or European workers. It is also true that Japanese unions are in effect company unions and collude with management with respect to long hours and the intensification of work. It is also true that opposition in a Japanese union is about as easy as in the Soviet Union. Is that the direction we want to go? The Japanese savings rate is high in part because the Japanese welfare state is the least adequate among advanced industrial nations. American welfare spending is also comparatively low but that is often explained by the

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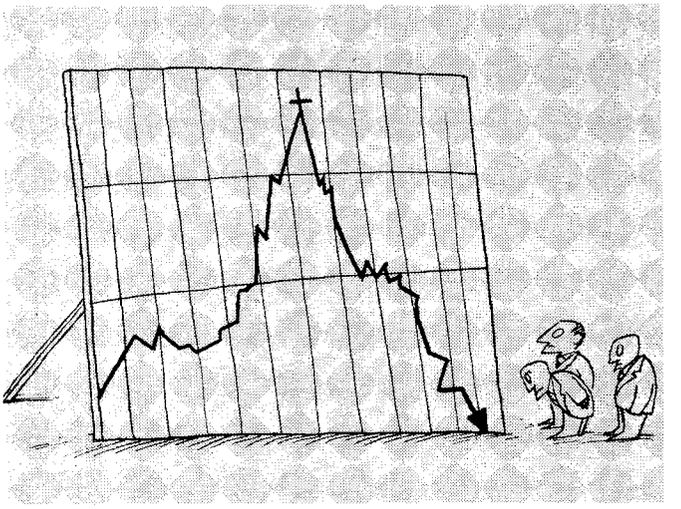
high rate of our military expenditures. Given the extremely low rate of military expenditure in Japan, their welfare provision is scandalous. Again, is that how we want to go? We may admire the Japanese educational system, but the Japanese themselves are becoming increasingly concerned with its high human cost. Winston Davis has recently described the cost in vivid terms:

> No better example of the triumph of economic goals and values could be given than contemporary Japanese education. The costs of development, initially borne by women and peasants, now rest most heavily on school-age children. Over the years, the Japanese have developed an examination-based meritocracy to supply industry with the kind of "human capital" it needs. It aims at, and succeeds in producing, workers who are docile, group-oriented, and broadly but not deeply educated — or better — who are socialized in the technical and functional rationality of industry itself. To realize the bureaucrats' dream of making the twenty-first century the "century of Japan," the Japanese have, in effect, chained their own children to the walls of Weber's "iron cage." Some children spend as much time at their desks at school and in *juku* (after-school tutoring or cram schools) as English children did at their workbenches in the early nineteenth century. This system of "education" is probably the main cause of one of the country's most serious problems, violence in the home and at school. (Winston Davis, "Religion and Development: Weber and the East Asian Experience," in Myron Weiner and Samuel P. Huntington, eds. *Understanding Political Development*, Little, Brown, 1987.)

I suggest that those who would have us follow the Japanese educational model have some explaining to do.

But what the financial-page article did not mention is that Japan is a mobilized society, administered from the top down. It is in effect a one-party state, the Liberal-Democratic party having been in power continuously since the end of World War II with the exception of one brief period many years ago. The degree of mobilization by an interlocking state and corporate bureaucracy is probably more total than during World War II, and the purpose of all this massive mobilization is to outcompete the rest of the world economically. In the face of falling profit margins and intense competition from newer Pacific rim economies, the Japanese have not come up with anything new but only with the determination to bear down even harder than before. The Japanese have put competition and survival absolutely foremost. In so doing they have created a society most Americans would not want to live in.

If the United States is having problems in economic competitiveness, it is in part because of the enormous emphasis we have placed on military competitiveness with the Soviet Union. While we have not mobilized our whole society to the extent the Japanese have, we have created a military command economy which has made the Pentagon one of the largest state socialist enterprises in the



world, employing already in 1980, according to Seymour Melman in *Profits without Production* (1983), over 5.5 million persons: 2 million in the armed forces, 1 million civilian employees, and 2.5 million employed by military contract firms which have in effect been removed from the free market and receive direction from Pentagon bureaucrats. By concentrating our research and development spending in the military sphere to a degree far greater than the Japanese or the Europeans, we have hindered our civilian technology. The possible civilian spinoffs from military technological innovation are frequently not cost-effective in international competition since for the Pentagon money is no object, whereas the Japanese and the Germans are trying to create advanced civilian products as cheaply as possible.

I am not so foolish as to think that economic competition at home and abroad or the Soviet military threat are not real dangers. We live in a dangerous and rapidly changing world in which not much is predictable nor under anyone's easy control. Writing recently of this situation Robert Heilbroner has reminded us that it is unrealistic to expect any society to work well. The most is that we expect that it work well enough ("Realities and Appearances in Capitalism," in Robert B. Dickie and Leroy S. Rouner, eds., *Corporations and the Common Good*, Notre Dame, 1986). Yet, if we avoid any utopian expectations, I believe that it is still important to talk about the common good or even about the good society. We need a standard to measure where we are, even if we cannot expect to live up to it any time soon. Even more importantly, such discussion helps us break the demonic hold of the competition/survival syndrome, the notion that we are controlled by iron laws to which we can only adapt. Competition and even survival are not absolutes; we must always ask the cost. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (Matt. 16:26.) The bishops' pastoral letter is right to hold up to us another standard that ought to take precedence even over competition and survival. That is the standard of participation and solidarity, based on the fact that ultimately we are members one of another, members of the same body.

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Jesus' teachings are so shocking just because he seems to fly in the face of the preoccupation of this world with competition and survival. Jesus was the shepherd who would leave the whole flock and go in search of the one lost sheep. Creative destruction for the sake of the competitive edge did not seem to be his style. Satan offered him all the wealth and power of this world. Jesus turned him down in order to take his place with the poorest and most marginal peasants of Galilee. For Jesus, women and children, blind beggars and lepers were all equally and imperishably valuable. It would be hard to imagine an ethic more utterly opposed to Darwinian selection, to the survival of the fittest, than the ethic of Jesus. Gertrude Himmelfarb begins her book on the idea of poverty with two quotes, one from Samuel Johnson in 1770, "A decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization. . .", and the second from R. H. Tawney in 1926, "There is no touchstone, except for the treatment of childhood, which reveals the true character of a social philosophy more clearly than the spirit in which it regards the misfortunes of those of its members who fall by the way." It would seem that Christians even before the bishops' economic pastoral knew that "the preferential option for the poor" is an obligation that impinges on all of us.

Yet decisive as this implication of the teaching of Jesus is for us, there are two other implications of his teaching, that might enter into our discussions. It is not just that Jesus would have us remember the poor. He also wants us to remember the rich, how they imagine that their riches will save them, how they harden themselves with self-sufficiency, how they fail to experience the spiritual elation of the poor when the poor share what little they have with one another. Indeed, with our wealth and our technology we have elaborated a way of life that Jesus could scarcely have imagined, a way of life I and my fellow authors described in *Habits of the Heart* (California, 1985), and that Albert Borgmann has recently designated as "advanced poverty." The brute poverty in America and in so much of the world is a scandal, but the advanced poverty, the poverty of affluence that is so prevalent among the most educated and successful of us, is a scandal to which we badly need to attend.

Finally, I think we need to heed Jesus' warning that in attempting to save our lives we may lose them. Single-minded preoccupation with survival may set off just that train of events that could finish us. This is obvious in the nuclear arms race where the search for absolute invulnerability could destabilize the balance of power and produce total disaster. But the same could be true in the realm of economic competition as well. If every organization and every nation is bent only on its own economic survival we could produce a world economic collapse that would make 1929 look like a tea party.

Yes, Jesus is utopian. But he is also remarkably hardheaded. It is our task to bring his message, as spelled out for our times in the pastoral letter on the economy, to our fellow Christians and our fellow citizens. While it may appear to many Americans as bad news, I believe that we can show that in the world in which we live, it is the only good news there is.

"Yes, Charlie—I'm pretty sure she's giving me a cordless telephone."

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WHAT'S BECOME OF THE PASTORAL?

THE ECONOMICS PASTORAL, A YEAR LATER — II

KAREN SUE SMITH

One year has passed since the final version of the bishops' letter on the economy was adopted. *Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* is currently making its way into parish programs, Catholic school curricula and course materials, justice and peace activities, and conferences of laity, religious, and clergy. How is the letter being communicated? How fast? And at what level of seriousness? Will its messages filter down into mainstream Catholic thinking and acting?

The U.S. bishops — savvy about the price tag needed to promote a nationwide discussion focused on economic justice — allocated $525,000 for "implementation," in other words, to ensure that this letter reaches the grass-roots Catholic community. A national Office of Implementation — funded for three years — was set up in Washington D.C. soon after the vote approving the final draft. Implementation Director Robert Williams and his staff of four have produced models and resources for teaching the pastoral, including a newsletter which reports briefly on what dioceses around the country are doing vis à vis economic justice. The office convenes groups, espouses the pastoral's vision and themes, keeps in close touch with some 130 diocesan coordinators of implementation (out of 174 dioceses in the U.S.), and has just begun to provide on-site consultation with dioceses seeking assistance in how to move from information to action. "The letter can't be implemented from here," Williams says, noting that his goal is to go beyond simply supplying information and help people begin to *act* on the basis of the pastoral.

Of course, information is still the most immediate objective: how to let some 52 million U.S. Catholics know what the bishops have written, now that the secular media no longer find the pastoral newsworthy.

These days, Catholics must learn about the pastoral from locally sponsored workshops, speakers' series, and parish homilies, or they must read about it in publications not available on the newsstand. Williams reports that some type of training session for clergy and laity has been held in each of the dioceses with an implementation coordinator. And there are six diocesan letters (one in process) that have been written, applying the pastoral's insights locally. At the end of October, 76,000 copies of the complete text of the pastoral had been distributed; plus 47,000 of the *Origins* text; 935,000 of the "Catholic Update" summary; 86,972 of the summary by James Hug, S.J.; and almost 5,000 copies recently translated into Spanish. Still, according to a recent *National Catholic Reporter* survey, 71 percent of the adult Catholics questioned said they had never heard of the bishops' letter on the economy.

There are distinct limits to the work of the implementation office. This initial year has been spent setting up ways to integrate the letter's principles and recommendations into existing church structures. That means dioceses and parishes primarily, starting at the top and working down—so far, mostly at the top, with diocesan agencies and clergy education. The church being the church, implementation has been strikingly uneven. By no means are all those diocesan coordinators full-time. And one-quarter of the dioceses have no coordinators at all. On the other hand, Robert Williams likes to point to places like Pittsburgh with a full-time director overseeing an Office of Programs for the Unemployed and currently buying a building to house its several programs.

Given the process of dialogue and wide-ranging consultation which forged the letter, it's not surprising that all sorts of groups—some lay-led, others sponsored by religious orders—are jumping in to prepare teaching materials and to promote programs appealing to the Catholic in the pew.

- Two early concerns raised about the letter's language (written on a thirteen-year educational level) and its length have been addressed by the producers of several shorter, plain-language versions. The widely used "Catholic Update" condensation published by St. Anthony Messenger Press is only four pages.
- Several video cassettes, some regionally produced, are available, as well as the bishops' own video, "For All the People," and the nationally-televised film "God and Money" (reviewed, *Commonweal*, November 7, 1986).
- A dramatic/musical presentation on the pastoral (now on video) has been produced by "Between the Times," a Chicago-based, four-member performing arts group which has

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been invited to dioceses around the country, as parishes try to reach their members via artistic and creative means.

- Liturgy Training Publications has produced a book of excerpts from both the peace and economics pastorals that correspond with the Sunday Scriptures during Lent.
- Xavier Society for the Blind has produced a cassette for its constituency.
- The pastoral is published in Spanish (also in Dutch, French, and German), and one Spanish video is available; however, much still needs to be done to communicate the bishops' letter to Spanish-speaking Catholics.

In addition to study guides and training materials, the economics pastoral has stimulated about a half-dozen volumes of serious essays. There have been countless lectures, panel discussions, and workshops on university campuses, in parishes, and at the meetings of Catholic organizations.

How much of such activity is there altogether? How many people are attending these single-shot presentations? How many ongoing programs (weekly or monthly study and action groups, for example) are in existence? How many of which materials have been purchased? And more important, which types of people (age, sex, income, occupation, education, etc.) are participating in discussions of the letter? Which dioceses have examined the justice of their own personnel practices? What is happening on Catholic campuses?

If that is information a statistician might dream about, it is also information that might help get at the more basic questions for church leaders: Whom is the pastoral really reaching? And what are its lasting effects? For the present, answers to those questions remain guesswork. The Office of Implementation does not keep tabs on activities that fall outside the ken of diocesan directors. (The office has made one survey of "start-up activities," and says that another one is in the works.) No long-term system for monitoring pastoral-related activities has been developed, let alone research to track the pastoral's impact. Indeed, the whole idea of initiating further research on the substantive issues the pastoral only began to discuss has apparently been consigned to limbo by the bishops' conference. One wonders what will happen when the three-year funding for implementation runs out.

An informal telephone survey of several universities as well as five dioceses, suggested to me by Mary Baudouin of the Office of Implementation, yielded the following:

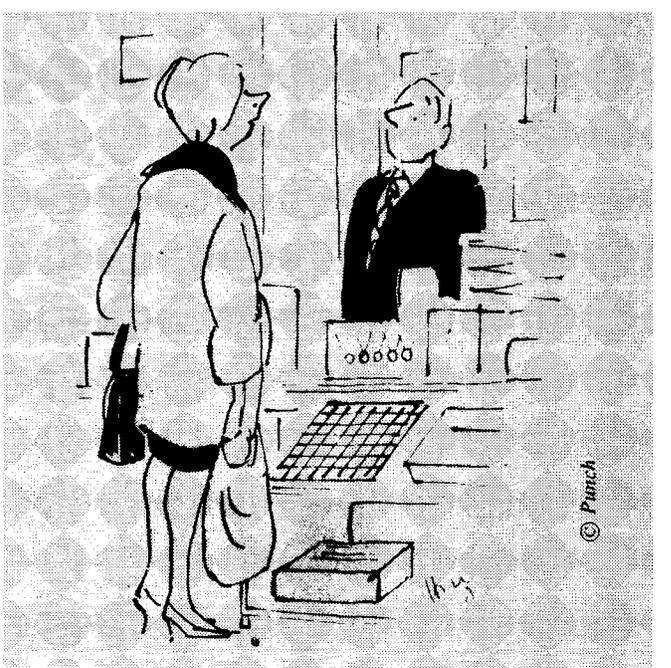
Louisville, Kentucky. The archdiocese has formed a task force from thirteen different diocesan agencies (Catholic Charities, Peace and Justice, etc.) to explore how the pastoral's principles can be integrated with existing agency plans. For parishes, the diocese held a two-day conference which brought out representatives from half the parishes in the diocese.

Jim Lund, the newly hired director of the diocesan Peace and Justice Center, has become involved with a state-wide coalition for welfare reform, which is lobbying for benefit increases, adjustment of standards, voluntary training and education programs, and for an unemployed parent program for AFDC recipients. Kentucky currently ranks forty-fifth in the nation in the monthly sum allotted each welfare recipient. Coalition members deserve some credit for the 5 percent increase in welfare benefits to take effect in January.

To the question "How do you measure successful implementation?" Lund countered by asking: "Does success with the economics pastoral mean the struggling of a business executive? An increase in the Campaign for Human Development collection? Getting the Kentucky legislature to reform some system? Or the creation of economic development projects?"

University of Notre Dame. Kenneth Jameson, professor of economics, has taught the economics letter in one core course, using the videotape "God and Money." Students like the tape and the exposure to the bishops' ideas, but otherwise, reaction was not overwhelmingly favorable. "Only a small number are grabbed by it," Jameson said. "For some of *those* students, the pastoral articulates an alternative to the dominant cultural vision."

During the last three fall semesters, Charles Wilbur, professor of economics and a key advisor to the bishops' drafting committee, has offered an upper-division course on ethics and the economy which discussed the letter for three solid weeks. At this level, the response has been very good, generating hard-hitting questions, such as: "Is the idea of economic rights a good way to express Christian responsibility? What can we say about human motivation; are people lazy, and the pastoral too idealistic in those parts calling for cooperation rather than competition? Are the pastoral's specific proposals likely to be effective; will government



"I want an executive toy for a director in the 40 to 45 age group."

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A view from Wall Street . . .

Rev. Andrew Dittrich, S.J., is an economist on staff at the Wall Street Jesuits, an organization which promotes dialogue between the business community and the church. The organization conducts panel discussions and speakers' series, publishes a newsletter, leads retreats, prayer groups, and Bible studies. The following comments are excerpts from a recent conversation with Dittrich on the pastoral on economic justice.

"Church leaders can seed political discussion with questions, formulating questions political representatives will have to answer. I hoped that this would happen in 1984 regarding the peace pastoral. It would have been great if candidates had had to answer questions on war and peace . . . but it never got that far; the great abortion issue came up.

"One danger with these pastorals is the perception that special interest groups have the bishops by the jugular: 'Mondale in a miter.'

"The higher you go, the more breadth of vision you can expect, the more willing people are to look openly at the letter. Less receptive are middle-level executives and administrators of public programs who say it's all a good idea, but wait till you try it.

"We need to open up the receptivity of the businessperson to see that labor-force needs are a societal problem; that unemployables (one-parent families, e.g.) bring huge social costs. The market does not have a self-correcting mechanism to account for these groups. While I see business nudging in this direction, I don't think we can wait to convert individuals to the bishops' way of looking at the U.S. economy. We have to go after the general public . . . giving information to the media so it gets on the political agenda. The 25 percent of children now in poverty are tomorrow's voters and workers. They may bring a radical program with them, more radical than many business people are comfortable with.

"There are ways in which business can exert a positive influence now. Half of America's output is from companies with over a thousand employees. Such companies could help with schools; build bonds between students and employers; offer high school students jobs through internships; offer incentives like jobs upon graduation. . . . There are not enough honor students to meet employers' needs. In New York City, for example, 50 percent of high school students drop out. Social justice is not an ornament on the Catholic Christmas tree." ●

K.S.

public-works projects, for example, be the best way to tackle unemployment?"

Kathleen Maas Weigert, of the university's Center for Social Concerns, has found in teaching the pastoral that students need to review the whole concept of the church's teaching role, the authority of the bishops, and the Christian's responsibility to act in the political arena, before they can understand the letter.

Has there has been any push to incorporate the economics pastoral into the core curriculum? The peace pastoral is included on the bibliography given to every sophomore. Weigert said that in the spring of 1985, a resolution was put to the Academic Council: "to mandate that students be exposed to the implications of the Catholic social teachings for their particular disciplines and professions." However, that resolution was later amended to read: "that the faculty of each college shall *explore* . . . ways in which students encounter curricularly the implications of the Catholic social teachings. . . ." Why was the language weakened?

The Notre Dame bookstore ordered no copies of the pastoral for coursework this semester. Next semester the Peace Institute is offering through the law school one course on both the peace and economics pastorals.

Since universities are decentralized institutions, finding out what is happening on campus is difficult and time-consuming. A staff member of the archdiocese of Atlanta thought that the Emory University campus ministry and Aquinas Center were using the pastoral, but Rev. Marty Iott, O.P., said, "We haven't started yet. . . ." Someone else thought that the Harvard Business School used the letter as required reading — and perhaps some professor does — but Dr. Kenneth Goodpastor, who teaches the business ethics course, only said, "I'm aware of the pastoral, its content . . . but it is not used in my course. . . . though I've heard it talked about informally over lunch among professors here."

A large class taught at Harvard University by Harvey Cox — composed of undergraduate and graduate students, including a significant number of Hindus, Buddhists, etc. — not only read and discussed a draft of the letter, but students were required to send a personal response to the U.S. bishops.

College faculties need to ask themselves just what place study of the bishops' letter has in their curriculum; whether it should be mandatory in Catholic schools; how and when it will be taught.

Jesuit Colleges, Washington, D.C. Conference. Using alumni rolls, the Washington Conference of Graduates of Jesuit Colleges invited thousands of its former students now living in the greater Washington area to an all-day conference on the pastoral last October. Five hundred graduates, mostly middle-aged professionals, attended, including some present and retired Pentagon and State Department officials who aired their views in lively discussions.

Several participants were reported saying they would not have attended a parish or diocesan function, but came "out of

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loyalty to the Jesuits." The group did voice considerable interest in further events focused on the pastoral.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Fred Kammer, S.J., has referred to the pastoral in some fifteen of his columns for the diocesan newspaper during the last three years. Kammer refers to the letter when discussing such local events as the severe budget cuts in Louisiana now that the oil and gas industries have flagged. Unemployment there is the highest in the country, 10-15 percent overall, and as high as 30 percent in some parishes.

In November 1986, the diocese held a major conference on unemployment which included hands-on, how-to sessions preparing participants for job interviews and for organizing job banks and job clubs.

The regional pastoral letter, "Hope: The Church Responds to Unemployment," by Bishop Stanley Ott (one of several modeled after the U.S. bishops' letter) grew out of this conference. By Easter, Ott's letter had been inserted in the diocesan paper, distributed to every registered Catholic in the diocese. In it, Bishop Ott pledged to allocate 10 percent of the annual diocesan collection to the unemployed. This year that sum amounted to $36,000. $30,000 was divided equally among the six deaneries for direct assistance (up to $500 per family); $6000 was set aside to fund unemployment projects: a conference on unemployment in the eastern part of the diocese where a new factory is opening up; a parish food bank; a job search project; a pastor/leader training program focusing on the economics pastoral. The diocese has allocated $2000 of its own budget to stock materials for further education on the letter.

In response to the pastoral, the Louisiana Catholic Conference has sent a slate of legislative priorities to the governor. The priorities were formulated by the Catholic education, social concerns, and charities agencies within the state and stressed the economic plight of the poor.

Sioux City, Iowa. Fr. Marvin Boes, diocesan coordinator and chairman of the Peace and Justice Committee, describes a three-year diocesan implementation plan which revolves around six teams of diocesan personnel, laity, specialists, and volunteers who will direct their attention to management, education, clergy, family life, communication, and social ministry. The first year each team will study the document. The second year the teams will identify the diocesan leaders within each area outlined in the pastoral. The third year, the whole diocese will be involved in studying and applying the letter.

"It took five years to put the document together," says Boes, "so it will take us some time to implement it."

When asked how all this compared with the implementation of the pastoral on peace, Boes says, "We didn't organize ourselves this way. The only thing we did last time was to have half a dozen presentations, though the education office also brought the peace pastoral into the school curricula."

. . . And from the corporate boardroom

James O'Leary, now retired, is a former vice-chairman of the board of United Trust Company and has served on eight or ten corporate boards, including the Federal National Marketing Association and the Bowery Savings Bank. He holds a Ph.D. in economics. O'Leary's involvement with the pastoral began three years ago when he read a *New York Times Magazine* article about the letter's preparation and the Simon-Novak response.

"I know Bill Simon, Leon Kendall, and Peter Grace. But the whole philosophy behind the counter-letter was Michael Novak's: the best economy is one where everyone relies on his own self- interest and the devil take the hindmost. It isn't Christian. To me the bishops seemed right on target. I think they let off the economy rather easily, though it was a powerful statement.

O'Leary wrote to Bishop Peter Rosazza of Hartford and offered his help. He reviewed each draft, though he never testified himself. Since the pastoral's adoption, O'Leary has been a sought-after speaker for panels and workshops.

"I haven't been a very good Christian all my life, but the bishops are calling for conversion — to reform your life and that's what's happened to me. You've got to live Catholicism every day in your workplace . . . I hope others in the business community will be open to this . . . to being less worshipful of Adam Smith and the 'invisible hand.'

"I think the bishops' critique is widely accepted by the academic economics profession . . . I showed a copy of the pastoral to Walter Heller before he died and he was ecstatic about it. Many recent recipients of the Nobel prize would applaud the letter.

"About . . . this philosophy that the free market deals adequately with poverty, there is something to it historically, but in the last eight years the distribution of wealth has worsened; and the idea simply has not worked. It is fiction that it will. 'Dog eat dog' won't cure poverty.

"I doubt if the economics pastoral has had much impact yet on business people. Too few have even read it. The superficial view is that the letter is socialistic. Here in Bridgeport, young businessmen are immediately turned off. They think you're Karl Marx or something. At Stamford, there was an excellent meeting; women planned it. The pastoral is more appealing to women, perhaps, because they're less affected by the pat line about how great the economy is.

"The letter is beginning to have an impact politically. Republicans seem to have *got religion* about compassion in the economy. It is crucial that the pastoral be made known to the American electorate before the next election."

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One goal of the Sioux City diocese is to set up a peace and justice committee in every parish, which can look into employment and fair-wage issues, among others. Between 1981 and 1986, land values in agriculture decreased some 60 percent in Iowa, putting pressure on the local communities when access to farm loans was decreased, foreclosures were forced, and farm-related businesses suffered. Many people moved out of small towns and large corporations moved in, buying up small businesses like meat-processing plants, and reducing wages of the workers. One company started workers at $5/hr., below poverty level for a one-wage-earner family of four.

Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana. Robert Gorman, assistant director of Catholic Social Services, and Melinda Keane, SHCG, coordinator of parish social ministry, have worked with food banks and clothing stores before. Now they work with an ecumenical group of churches and agencies, the Alternative Development Task Force. The task force has formed a food bank noted for its economic development arm, through which the Catholic diocese has begun to structure its social change efforts. The Houma-Thibodaux diocese, unlike others in Louisiana and unlike most of the South, is 60-70 percent Catholic, and the prestige of the church here is high.

Initially, the coalition invited together business experts in fabrication welding, farming, construction, crafts, and other fields, with the purpose of forming linkages with the unemployed. People looking for jobs, machinery, or specific skills might connect with one another—a boat builder who had equipment but no skills in marketing his boats; or someone with marketing expertise in need of a product to sell. "A handful of people got jobs that very night," Keane said.

Next, they held small-business development seminars at the state university for ten-week sessions which were so successful they may be repeated.

Perhaps most creative of all is an idea the coalition calls "the tall grass ordinance." This ordinance requires that absentee landlords would have to pay fines if the grass on their property isn't cut. The notion behind the ordinance is that people low on food and work could be employed as grass cutters and/or secure a no-strings-attached agreement to use the fallow land for vegetable gardens, private or commercial. The ordinance has not yet been adopted.

Catholic Social Services (CSS) has helped to form BYOU [Build Your Own Opportunities Unltd.], an economic development organization formed to encourage the diversification of small businesses in an area overly dependent upon one industry, oil. Already, through BYOU, a handcrafts co-op has been created and christened "A la Main" [by hand] and has spun off to independence. Incorporated in 1987, A la Main has seventy members and one full-time employee. Its gross intake in October was $3,400. BYOU is now looking into credit union formation—a project devised in light of the number of bankruptcies filed by small oil-related businesses in the area.

Twenty to 30 percent of U.S. seafood ports are in Louisiana. Yet, the local fishing industry — shrimping, oysters, crabs, red fish — is in need of assistance. Louisiana is losing some sixty square miles of wetlands every year through soil erosion, and wetlands mean fishing and homes. The pastoral letter's section on agriculture, clearly written with the Midwestern farm crisis in mind, has been re-worded in Lousiana parlance. Here, farming means fishing and soil means wetlands.

In 1986 CSS founded the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana to educate and organize voters for political activity. The Louisiana Catholic bishops stated that this coastal protection has moral implications and merits urgent action. Soon after this pronouncement, the state's Methodist bishops passed a similar resolution. Together, both conferences of bishops are sponsoring a seminar on coastal restoration.

Atlanta, Georgia. With 256,000 Catholics, sixty-five parishes, eighteen missions, and fourteen schools, the archdiocese of Atlanta is large geographically (about half the state of Georgia) but sparse in Catholics (2.9 percent of the state's population). Tom Brassington, Director of Religious Education for the archdiocese, said ten parishes have begun implementation; the priests, deacons, and other key parish leaders attended two days of training. These leaders will later on enact parish action plans throughout the deanery. (Emory University's Aquinas Center participated in the training sessions, as did fifty-one newly ordained deacons.)

The planning session recommended that 10 percent of the parish collection be used for local social action activities; that leaders gain skills in networking and community organizing; that wealthier parishes adopt a poorer sister parish within the diocese.

"When you unpack the pastoral, it raises questions about fair wages, benefits, how we invest and spend our parish money, what companies are in our diocesan investment portfolios, etc. Should a Catholic organization sponsor companies that invest money in nuclear weaponry? Apartheid in South Africa? What is the relationship of economics to faith?" Brassington said. "I think the economics pastoral gives credibility to justice as a constitutive part of the Gospel. . . ."

Two questions remain to be sorted out before the implementation of the pastoral can really be evaluated. Who is being reached by the pastoral's message? What is the message actually being presented?

There are obvious dangers in connection with the first question. Naturally those "who have ears to hear" will be the most receptive to the bishops' letter. All implementation efforts face the problem of preaching to the already converted, or if not the converted, those who are at least attached to the institution's chain of authority. It is fundamental, of course, that the letter begin to inform the activities of the church's own social agencies—and of the church itself as an employer and inves-

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This is one in a series of articles, to appear in *Commonweal* over the next several months, that will examine different aspects of the U.S. bishops' pastoral.

tor. But it would be a small achievement if the pastoral were systematically disseminated only by diocesan offices and parish priests. Not even that kind of presentation, especially if limited to workshops or discussion groups and not woven into Sunday homilies, is apt to reach the majority of Catholics in working life, in the business sector, including college students and young professionals, whose involvement in the parish seldom goes beyond Mass attendance. Leadership by the laity themselves cannot be emphasized too strongly— leadership that has to transcend the political commitments of activist groups, often staffed or run by lay people as well as members of religious orders. Frequently, the liberal political agenda of these groups (conservative groups, needless to say, have not rushed to disseminate the pastoral) creates a barrier to mainstream Catholics who hold diverse political views, who are apolitical, or who just shy away from what they feel is a distinct political bias. As long as the pastoral appears to belong either to the clergy or to liberal activists, a great many Catholics in economic life will not feel that their own experience and concerns are adequately represented. They will not be reached.

Clearly there is an overlap here with the question of *what* is being presented. There is a widespread impression that the pastoral is "about poverty." It is, to be sure, but not only about poverty. There is also a natural tendency for those engaged in lobbying on behalf of social programs to use the pastoral as a source of "proof texts" legitimating their activities. Yet it should not be said of the pastoral five or ten years down the road that it merely inspired some more people to volunteer in soup kitchens and shelters, which might be considered very worthy but "extracurricular" efforts on behalf of the needy; or that the letter inspired the creation of a new diocesan program here or there, or boosted the morale of the hardy few who were already engaged in social justice lobbying; but that the letter failed to mobilize most of the Catholic citizenry, let alone the wider community, to take up the discussion of government responsibility, and it left untouched the whole question of the private sector's role in shaping a just economy. How can the union member, the small contractor, the personnel administrator, or the responsible consumer and taxpayer see that the pastoral speaks to daily economic decisions? Whom to hire? How to bargain? What to build? Where to invest? What and what not to buy?

Only if the full array of the pastoral's concerns is presented, as well as its nuances, can *Economic Justice for All* be effectively interjected into Catholic life and the public arena.

SCREEN

ETHNIC COLORINGS

'EMPEROR,' 'THE DEAD,' & 'WANNSEE'

The Last Emperor is sprawling, untidy, sometimes confusing, and often superb. A successful attempt by Bernardo Bertolucci to recoup some of his waning reputation as a director, it provides some of the most stunning images of history and geography on screen in some time. Bertolucci's nominal subject is Pu Yi, last emperor of the imperial Chinese dynasty, who ascended to the throne in the early part of this century and lived to see the Chinese civil war, the invasion by Japan, the triumph of Mao, even the Cultural Revolution. Bertolucci's real subject is history: viewed with cold brilliance (as in his *1900*) or with the sensuous eroticism of his *Last Tango*. Faults are easy to find in this film; so too is wild, exuberant beauty and energy.

The Last Emperor was filmed in Peking—indeed, inside the exotic, imperial "Forbidden City," the complex of palaces that Communist authorities have closed off for several decades. Viewers may recall Hollywood's studio mock-up of the entrance of the Forbidden City from *Fifty-Five Days at Peking*, a Cold-War treatment of the Boxer Rebellion as the first sign of the "yellow peril." *The Last Emperor* tries for more authentic views. Like the current crop of films from Russia (*Dark Eyes, Theme, Repentance*), the film is a cinematic expression of *glasnost* (or at least its Far Eastern equivalent). The cast is almost entirely Chinese or Chinese-American, including some faces from recent San Franciscan films like *Dim Sum*, such as the glamorous Joan Chen, who plays Pu Yi's wife.

Perhaps because of his unusual degree of access, Bertolucci has softened any possible criticism of Mao and his heirs. Indeed, in some prison sequences, one dedicated Communist (played by a Chinese actor, Ying Ruo Cheng, who is now Peking's deputy minister of culture) is presented humanely. It would be easy to dismiss this entirely as propaganda if Bertolucci weren't so successful in suggesting that, in the Chinese context, at least some Communists were less corrupt than monarchists or nationalists, and less racist than the Japanese. No doubt Bertolucci had reasons to make a politic film; this doesn't mean it isn't provocative, or without some truth. It replaces the question of "Who lost China?" with "Why did the Maoists find it?"

The Last Emperor uses the evolution of Chinese society as background to Pu Yi's biography. The film opens with Pu Yi's internment in a Communist "re-education" center in 1949; after an attempt at suicide, it flashes back to his infancy and youth inside the enclosed Forbidden City nearly five decades before. Bertolucci maintains this apposite structure throughout the rest of the film, cutting between the drab monotony of a

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postwar socialist present and the bizarre, semi-feudal customs of the past. Despite some inevitable confusion in chronology, the flashbacks don't simply tell the story; they reinforce the theme of contrast between two systems of value. One feels sympathetically the shock to Pu Yi's system just in the colors Bertolucci uses: graygreen, or black and gray monochromes in the prison; gorgeous, extravagant imperial yellows and crimsons in the eye of memory.

The lead is played by various actors at different ages, including a cherubic Chinese child (Richard Vuu). The adult Pu Yi is John Lone, a Chinese American actor (*The Iceman*) who carefully catches the pathos of the last emperor's position. From his earliest youth, Pu Yi is seen more as a prisoner of circumstances than their ruler; the imperial title he holds is, from the beginning, a mere shadow of the real power that Sun Yat-sen, Chiang Kai-shek, other warlords, and Communists fight for in the world outside the palace. Bertolucci repeatedly has him attempting to run through palace or garrison gates to escape into the world outside: someone always closes him *in*. Ironically, Pu Yi makes his worst mistake when he thinks that he behaves most independently, fleeing China for Manchuria to set up what he thinks will be a restored empire under Japanese protection.

The Last Emperor has some of its sloppiest—and also most vivid — moments during those episodes in which Japan uses Pu Yi as its puppet. Unlike many films about "third-world" countries, *The Last Emperor* is almost entirely Asian in focus; the only Westerner is Pu Yi's tutor, played by Peter O'Toole, in one of his usual "not-entirely-there" modes. But in this case, O'Toole's diffidence only helps; it keeps the film emotionally Asian. "We are the greatest race in Asia!" a Japanese fascist yells at Pu Yi, reminding us that their World War began before Pearl Harbor and had dynamics independent of Western will or knowledge. Bertolucci has made a fine history film precisely because there is so little reference to the West. He has moved inside the skin of another culture, another race's experience of transition. The word "epic" is used too loosely to describe any large-scale historical film. Still, despite its defects, *The Last Emperor* has some of the genuine flavor.

The Dead is the last film of John Huston, who died this summer, bringing to a close the end of a career spanning *The Maltese Falcon* to *Prizzi's Honor*. Huston knew he was dying and intended this film as an appropriate goodbye. It is also a beautiful tribute to Ireland, a nation that too often is represented in our media only by terrorist bombings of the IRA. Joyce wrote *The Dead* and placed it at the end of *Dubliners* as a gesture *for* Ireland, not (as usual with him, *against*); he wanted, he said, to commemorate some of its old-fashioned graciousness, hospitality, and love of fine music.

Huston, like Joyce, has always had a genius for irony; but this posthumous swan-song is strongly romantic, elegiac, tender. You can feel the weight of Huston's sense of mortality, and his affection for life, behind every shot. The only question is an irksome aesthetic one: can Joyce's story really work as a film?

Huston sticks as close as possible to his source, but that itself may be the problem. Readers may recall the story's plot: the aunts of the Irish writer Gabriel Conroy have invited him and other guests for their annual "Twelfth Night" Epiphany party. Events lead to one of Joyce's special, secular, psychological "epiphanies": the story itself is one of the few occasions when his skill with puns and symbols was thoroughly aligned with narrative texture. But while Huston succeeds exquisitely in portraying Joyce's external Epiphany, the internal one evades him. But I frankly wonder if it could have been otherwise.

The Dead is splendidly photogenic. Huston shoots the party in a series of choreographed tableaux dominated by two color schemes, stark white versus dark, brownish red. We see them from the beginning, as Gabriel's two aunts, the aging, pallid, white-haired Julia Morkan (Cathleen Delany), and slightly younger, auburn-haired Aunt Kate (Helena Carroll), eagerly look down a bannister to espy each guest that arrives. An old Protestant (politely described as "of the other persuasion") comes in; he's played by veteran brogue-master Dan O'Herlihy, who sports a gigantic, shocking white mane far beyond "venerable." The rest of the party is all sepia: the younger women are all redheads and brunettes; the decanters, furnishings, curtains, all play on warm variants of brown or red. Huston has shot the film as a war between the colors of death and age and the colors of mature, energy-filled life. It's a delight to behold, especially in the ad-hoc concertizing scenes and the culmination of the party, when Gabriel (Donal McCann) toasts his aunts and cousin (Ingrid Craigie) as "the three graces of the Dublin musical world."

Music also dominates a last key scene at the party, when Gabriel's wife Greta (Anjelica Huston, the director's daughter, and the indomitable Mae Rose of *Prizzi's Honor*) is moved to distraction by a folk song, "The Lass of Aughrim." When Gabriel and Greta return to their hotel, he learns the reason why, prompting his "epiphany," a kind of lyrical *examen de conscience*.

It is in this private, poetic conclusion that the problem of the whole film becomes evident. The acting is adequate to the task, especially McCann. Huston tries to help with superbly lovely shots of Celtic crosses beneath the snow of the West of Ireland accompanying Gabriel's soliloquy; he also brings us back to the image of Aunt Julia, with Gabriel anticipating her wake. But *soliloquy* fails here; Gabriel winds up, like other Joyce main characters, talking to himself, precisely because the author, even at his most social, just doesn't believe enough in community to make it the key to his style. Shakespeare's soliloquies lead to action; Joyce's lead to reverie. This defect is less apparent in prose than film, with its greater need for

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dramatic presentation. What seems "delicate" in the rest of Huston's film verges toward "slight." One is touched, but not moved.

The Wannsee Conference is a brief film that deserves a note. It lasts only eighty-two minutes, the exact length of the episode in German history on which it is based: the meeting at which second-level Nazis worked out details of the "final solution." The film, produced and directed by Manfred Korytowski, is an exercise in calculated coldness; there is none of the high drama that one expects would be associated with such an event. Instead, Korytowski gives us the Holocaust via Hannah Arendt: the film depicts the banality of genocide at a tipsy board meeting.

Korytowski manages to make this suspenseful by suggesting, from the beginning, that some participants may have objections of some kind to the plans. He teases us with the possibility that some single but potent voice of humanitarian protest will be raised. The plot thus becomes a kind of historical "waiting for Godot." Only one participant in the affair raises the slightest objections, and these only over the technical determination of the Jewishness of Germans of mixed background. *The Wannsee Conference* thus works by invoking the "shock of the bland": it is one of the purest exercises ever in outraged understatement.

TOM O'BRIEN

STAGE

SEND IN THE CLOWNS

'FRANKIE,' 'BURN,' & 'DAISY'

"I used to do too much of the work in my plays," Terrence McNally told the *New York Times* (October 11); "I was trying to write the feelings in. But now I see that the actors find the feelings." McNally's new play, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, is one of a group of recent productions in which two characters circle one another before coming to an accommodation and in which the performers not only find the feelings but prove more interesting than their vehicles.

Frankie and Johnny is a kind of *Hite Report* in reverse in which the woman tries to avoid talking about her emotions and distrusts the much more open man. The play begins with the sex act (groans in the dark) and works its way to a final curtain in which the two characters brush their teeth in unison (to *Claire de Lune*). An oblique seduction comedy in which the persistent male persuades the reluctant woman of the possibility of a relationship more extended than a one-night stand, *Frankie and Johnny* deals lightly with the dangers of commitment and the desperation of being alone. Johnny, cook in the restaurant where Frankie is a waitress, is given to grand speeches, laced with bits of Shakespeare, which contrast with the simpler, sharp lines of Frankie. Although McNally presumably intends the audience to take the amusing final moment of his play as a tentative happy ending, I find it darkly happy at best. There is something frightening about Johnny's intensity, and I came away from the theater suspecting that Frankie's first response was the correct one. To share space with that steamroller is to risk being crushed, but I suppose that the play would insist that it is better to be overwhelmed than not whelmed at all. Johnny is oddly charmless as Kenneth Welsh plays him, all nerve ends and need, which may be what McNally intended and which adds to the disturbing undertone of the play. The triumph of the piece is Kathy Bates's Frankie. Bates, one of the most talented actresses on the American stage, makes her reaction lines more eloquent than Welsh's speeches, as she edges from surprise to exasperation to comic acceptance of the inevitable. There is a family resemblance among Bates roles — the flamboyant Dallas woman in *Come Back to the 5 and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean*, the wryly rational suicide in *'night, Mother*, the dissociated wife and mother in *Curse of the Starving Class* — but the actress's way with a serious funny line should not obscure that every character she plays has a shape of her own. Kathy Bates inhabits Frankie as the character inhabits the room, the life that McNally has given her, and the production is stronger for that symbiosis.

There is another darkly happy ending in Lanford Wilson's *Burn This*, and another closed, self-protective heroine who must be pried open by a relentless and relentlessly vocal male. Anna is a modern dancer, who was taking her first steps toward becoming a choreographer when the death of her friend, her mentor, her roommate brought her to a mourning standstill. Her grief and her apartment are invaded by Pale, the dead man's brother, eloquently foul-mouthed in his denunciation of New York City and the world at large, as outraged — on the surface, at least — by the absence of parking space as by the death of his brother. Pale, who is about as artificial as grand grotesques tend to be, is some kind of natural force, simply riding over the other characters in the play — Anna's more conventional boyfriend, her other homosexual roommate — and carrying the protesting Anna off to bed every time he (or the drink) bring him to her door. At the end, having agreed to separate, they are brought back together through the good offices of the roommate, a gay Mary Worth, and they accept what both suspect will be a union as disastrous and painful as it is necessary. Beneath this meeting of contraries, there is a subtheme about love, loss, and art. The dance that Anna creates out of the loss of her partner and the sexual energy of her nights with Pale is said to be forceful, commanding, a work of genius alongside the tepid exercises of the other choreographers on the same program, poor would-be professionals who presumably are unlost and underlaid. At the same time, Anna's less vital boyfriend, a screenwriter who thinks that all movies are bad, writes the serious script he has always wanted to do, a contemporary love story (presumably *Burn This*)

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which the pain of his loss of Anna makes possible.

This recycled romantic myth of creativity need not be taken too seriously, for the heart of the play beats in Pale and Anna, less as characters than as roles for John Malkovich and Joan Allen. Malkovich is outrageous and totally fascinating. He roars, rages, and flutes his way through his part, modulating only to demonstrate how to make a proper pot of tea or to suggest that his hurricane temperament can calm into tenderness. Walter Kerr in a recent column (*New York Times*, November 15) suggested that Malkovich is wrecking Wilson's play, and a playwright who shall remain nameless asked me the other day if I thought Malkovich would ever make his performance mesh with the rest of the cast. I think that Malkovich is the Pale that Wilson wanted, that his unmeshed excess is realizing not trashing the playwright's intention. I miss only the note of vulnerability in the character, for the chinks in Pale's armor, as Malkovich shows them, seem as calculated as most of the rest of the performance. That calculation, however, belongs as much to the character as the actor, for Pale is a self-created figure, always conscious of his costume, his gestures, his rhetoric. For me, the odd thing about Malkovich's performance, which has received so much praise and blame, is that my attention regularly moved from him to Joan Allen. Not all that odd perhaps, because I watched her instead of Kathleen Turner whenever they were on screen together in *Peggy Sue Got Married* and I was startled at what a substantial character she made of Ann in the recent television production of *All My Sons*. Her Anna in *Burn This* often sits silently, her sentences broken off by Pale's verbal avalanche. The play of reactions across her face is a joy to behold. It is her amusement, her impatience, her disbelief that gives force to Pale's fury of words. Less is more in *Burn This*, as it is in *Frankie and Johnny*, and Joan Allen, like Kathy Bates, makes her play particularly worth seeing.

The couple in Alfred Uhry's *Driving Miss Daisy* are hardly the lovers *in extremis* of the McNally and Wilson plays, but they achieve a distant intimacy of their own. Miss Daisy is an aging Jewish woman, no longer able to drive her own car safely, and Hoke Coleburn is the not-so-young black man that Daisy's son hires as the chauffeur she does not want. Set in Atlanta, between 1948 and 1973, *Driving Miss Daisy* is not so much a play as a series of dramatic sketches, each making its own comic or touching point, which chronicles the growing dependence of the two characters on one another. Although they are recognizable types, Miss Daisy and Hoke are primarily juicy roles for actors. There is not much depth in the characters. Although Miss Daisy becomes aware of and responds to the changes in the South over the years, she remains the same crotchety, outspoken woman, unwilling to admit to any weakness, and Hoke is consistently patient with and amused by his employer. The appeal for performers comes in the fact that these characters age in the course of the evening and, as the still popular *I'm Not Rappaport* indicates, audiences are fascinated by actors playing old — or, in this case, old, older, oldest. *Driving Miss Daisy* seems little more than an occasion to see Morgan Freeman and Dana Ivey display their considerable technical skills. Yet the play, even more obviously a theater piece than *Burn This* and *Frankie and Johnny*, is more consistently aware of the world outside the theater than are the hermetic works of McNally and Wilson.

GERALD WEALES

ART

THE VISIONS OF OTHERS

ZURBARÁN AT THE MET

Because Zurbarán's reputation is the way it is, the exhibition of his paintings that has just moved from New York's Metropolitan Museum to the Grand Palais in Paris will come as a revelation to many, and a disappointment to some. Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664) is the sort of Old Master whom it is easy never to have heard of. Many people, coming upon these paintings for the first time, will consider his startling colors, his often daring figural juxtapositions, and his dramatic piety a most welcome discovery. At the same time, he is well enough known through reproductions of his very best paintings that some art lovers may be saddened to find him often falling short of their expectations.

This is because the present exhibition of seventy-one paintings, curated by the French scholar Janice Baticle, and attractively installed by the exhibition's coordinator, Walter Liedtke, ascribes to the master some disconcerting examples of studio work, while other paintings, though by Zurbarán, have not yet been restored to that pristine shininess that viewers have come to expect from first-rate museums. Thus it is necessary to bear with the master just a bit. This feeling of disappointment passes upon closer acquaintance, and Zurbarán comes once more to seem, as indeed he is, a formidable artist.

The fact that the great Zurbarán was not the best painter of Spain's Golden Age, the seventeenth-century, the fact that he had to yield to the still greater Velasquez and Ribera, and to vie for third place with Murillo, is in itself enough to establish that period as a watershed in the history of visual imaginings. Of the four Spaniards, however, Zurbarán was the most Spanish, with all the febrile religious intensity of his native land. Velasquez, almost his exact contemporary, was one of the most deeply secular of earlier painters. His stock in trade was a reality so real as to be shorn, even in his religious works, of the remotest shimmer of the spiritual. If Ribera was the most intellectual of the four, who revealed in every painting an agile, cosmopolitan intelligence determined to impress itself upon the real world, Murillo is the harbinger of a liberated theology, spurning the constraints of intelligence, and surrendering unconditionally to the sweetness of enthusiasm. Zurba-

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rán, by contrast, is more pious than Velasquez, more passionate than Ribera, and more dogmatic than Murillo.

Of the four painters, Zurbarán is also the most distinctive and the least original. The startling and abrupt brilliance of his style derives from an exotic confrontation of received ideas of colors and form, lifted bodily from their incompatible contexts, and set down recklessly beside one another. Ribera, Velasquez, and Murillo created visual worlds that were effortlessly coherent within themselves, whose every brush stroke bore the imprint of their maker. Compared with their Italianate tapestries, Zurbarán is the Grand Master of the crazy quilt. The ceaseless variety that informs his oeuvre stems from his willingness to make virtually any kind of painting you asked of him. If, for example, you gave him a fifty-year-old engraving, two generations out of date, he would dutifully make from it a very respectable work of art. One moment he might introduce the newest perspectival violence of Caravaggio, only to return in the next to the creaking medievalism of two-point perspective. His compositions range from the busiest of the Baroque to the opulent quietness of a mosaic, his figures from beautiful porcelain dolls to creatures irrefutably of flesh and blood. Once Zurbarán began to go out of fashion in the last two decades of his life, he found the greatest reception for his paintings in the New World, where the artists of Mexico and Peru had not yet entirely resolved the conflict between Roman Catholic imagery and native pagan forms.

Zurbarán was a syncretist, but within a single creed. It is suggestive that one of the subjects to which he returned more than once was the famous meeting of Saints Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, the latter the mystical Doctor Seraphicus, the former the hard-nosed logician, determined, through force of reason, to calibrate the orders of the angels. Be they Franciscan or Dominican, Mercedarian or Carthusian, Zurbarán could brilliantly accommodate the sometimes conflicting doctrines of whatever religious orders sought his assistance. The result of this facility is an emotional force deriving not so much from his own piety as from the promptings of his patrons. It is this translation into visual terms of an articulated doctrine, rather than of any personal vision, that, more than anything, is likely to render Zurbarán's paintings strangely distant from the experience of the modern viewer. At the request of his "immaculist" Franciscan patrons, as opposed to the Dominican "maculists," he duly portrays the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception on a crescent moon and with stylized halo. Yet, in general, he has suppressed symbols, in keeping with the pictorial austerity called for by the Council of Trent. Elsewhere, he used them more lavishly, as in "The Virgin and Christ in the House of Nazareth," possibly designed according to Carthusian devotional practices. Here fruits symbolize the Redemption, lilies and a water vessel the Virgin, while two doves are believed to refer to the Purification of the Virgin and the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple.

Since his paintings will rarely be found to conform to any generalization, they must be considered case by case. The exhibition at the Metropolitan began dramatically with one of the Zurbarán's most tenebrous paintings. Dating from 1627, when he was not yet thirty, it is the earliest work of his that we have. The crucified Christ is represented, his head drooping in the emphatic reality of death. This is as lugubrious and as uncompromisingly realistic as Zurbarán will ever get. Already in the next commission, he had come closer to what we expect of him, drastically simplifying his depiction of the dead Saint Bonaventure, extending the corpse diagonally from one side of the composition to the other, and surrounding it with weeping mourners. There is a touch of the fabulous and unreal in the clarity of the composition and the ashen sobriety of the faces, scarcely resembling anything else in Old Master painting.

Zurbarán was also a brilliant painter of fabrics, and some of

Saint Serpion by Zurbarán (1598-1664), Metropolitan Museum, on loan from Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut.

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his best square feet of painting depict those long and flowing robes that he loved, a summa of all the variations upon the pleat and fold. When he wasn't imitating gossamer-like fineness, he went all out on the sumptuous patterns of brocades, never with the exceptional detailing of Van Eyck, but with a wonderful sense of the rich stiffness of the starkly colored fabrics. His main chance to do fabrics was his depiction of young women as patron saints of monasteries and convents. This was a genre in which beautiful, raven-haired girls were set against a pale background, the instruments of their martyrdom lying picturesquely about them. The finest of these is St. Margaret of Antioch, poised and so painstakingly delineated that you can appreciate every weaving of the straw hat, every stitch of her striped saddlebag, every red and black bead in her coral necklace.

It was part of the unpredictability of Zurbarán that he could pass from the static fineness of detailing in St. Margaret to a dynamic, oily painterliness, akin to Velasquez's, in the depiction of three saints from 1634. He also had little difficulty in proceeding from the intimacy of these diminutive works to the grand manner of the five main paintings done for the monastery of Nuestra Senora de la Defension, in Jerez de la Frontera. To have assembled these in one room was perhaps the principal curatorial coup of the Metropolitan exhibition, and in their splendid display Zurbarán could be seen in one of his most classical and international of modes. A brilliant clarity characterizes these visions, an uncanny realness in the hard white eggshells, the sturdy pottery, and the rendering of a lamb. It is almost as though a breath of the outer world, a shaft of intensely bright sunlight, has entered the deepest recesses of a darkened church.

But only for a moment and then it has moved on. In a depiction of St. Francis from the late 1630s, the saint's face almost entirely concealed by the dark shadows of his cowl, his eyes raised to the empty night, we are in the presence of a bleakness of the soul starkly at variance with the popular perception of that historical figure. For Zurbarán, optimism would have to wait until the last years of the artist's life, when an entirely new spirit swept through his art, a softness and sweetness that he learned from Murillo, the leading painter of the next generation. "The Virgin and Child with St. John the Baptist," his last dated painting, is masterful in the subtlety with which it renders faces, fabrics, the unexpected fruits, and the soft wooliness of the lamb. The composition is simply set against a hazy, indeterminate background, and all emphasis is placed upon the tender absorption of the main actors. Zurbarán, who always left one guessing what he would do next, gave little indication that he would end on such a note as this. And yet it is a suitable close to an eminent, erratic life devoted to incarnating the visions of others.

JAMES GARDNER

James Gardner writes frequently on the arts for Commonweal.

THE LONG & THE SHORT OF COVERT ACTION

The CIA & the legacy of William Casey

JOHN B. JUDIS

Washington Post reporter Bob Woodward's *Veil* (Simon & Schuster, $21.95, 543 pp.) is neither a history of the CIA nor a biography of former CIA Director William Casey. It lacks the clear perspective of history and the motivational details of a biography. Woodward reveals almost nothing of Casey's early life, and Casey remains throughout *Veil* a news peg rather than a real character. Woodward's forte is journalism. And *Veil* is a five-hundred-page news story driven by the novelty of details. Some of the most spectacular details — like Woodward's bedside visit to the dying Casey — have been questioned and debated, but the most important details, those that reveal Casey's mode of operation at the CIA, have not been. The picture could not be more damning.

In *Veil*, Woodward shows that under William Casey the CIA resumed the "rogue elephant" role that it had been forced to abandon after the Church and Pike Committee hearings in 1975. By the time of the Iran-*contra* scandal, the covert action wing of the CIA had teamed up with the National Security Council to constitute an independent instrument of American foreign policy, distinct from the State and Defense Departments, and not accountable to the president or the public. Indeed, the question raised by *Veil* is whether, given the recurring record of these transgressions, the CIA's covert action wing should be shut down.

This question is addressed directly by Gregory F. Treverton's *Covert Action* (Basic Books, $19.95; 293 pp.), which, like *Veil*, was composed in the wake of the Iran-*contra* scandal. Treverton, a former staff member of Frank Church's Senate Select Committee and now a lecturer at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, draws a distinction between covert action and intelligence gathering. Spies who gather intelligence operate covertly, but covert action, which is the responsibility of the CIA's

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Directorate of Operations, is aimed not merely at intelligence but at intervening in a country's internal affairs, whether through propaganda or paramilitary means. Treverton argues for "setting a higher threshold" for the use of covert action. But even a higher threshold may not be sufficient to discourage an adventurer like Casey.

To understand what happened to the CIA under Casey, one has to understand the Office of Strategic Services, the World War II intelligence agency run by "Wild Bill Donovan." Casey, who was Donovan's Chief of Secret Intelligence for the European Theater, got his ideas of how an intelligence agency should work from that experience. And the CIA itself in its first decades was patterned after and run by veterans of the OSS. As CIA director, Casey was trying to recreate both the OSS and the pre-Watergate CIA.

The highly acclaimed OSS, which dropped thousands of agents behind enemy lines, was disbanded in 1945, but its clandestine apparatus, the Strategic Services Unit, was transferred to the War Department. When the CIA (initially called the Central Intelligence Group) was formed the next year, the Strategic Services Unit became the nucleus of the CIA's covert action wing. A third of the CIA's officers were OSS veterans, and when the Directorate of Operations was formed in 1952, its chief officers — Allen Dulles, Frank Wisner, and Richard Helms — were all OSS veterans.

To these OSS veterans, the clandestine side of the CIA was what mattered. They adopted OSS's methodology, setting about to organize resistance groups behind the Iron Curtain in the same way as they had tried to organize groups in Nazi-held areas. And they demanded for the CIA's covert wing the same political independence from Congress and even executive scrutiny that the OSS had had. Here lay the source of future disaster. The OSS had operated during a declaraed war, and Donovan had authority, which he transferreed to his subordinates, to do whatever was necessary to win the war. During the war, the OSS did not have to face any ideological or political questions; it did not have to submit itself to congressional oversight or press interviews. It was an operationally independent body whose overall purposes were clearly defined and accepted.

In its first years, the CIA appeared to enjoy the same clear definition and it sought the same operational independence. While the U.S. was not formally at war with the Soviet Union, Americans perceived the Soviet Union to be a direct threat, and they had no objection to an agency whose purpose was to thwart Soviet expansion. Congress and the press extended to the CIA the same kind of immunity that it had extended to the OSS. CIA consultation was strictly informal, on a "buddy system," and when the press discoverd a CIA covert action, it generally kept its mouth shut, as the *New York Times* did when its reporter Tad Szulc uncovered planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion.

But beginning in the early sixties, the CIA began to lose its privileged position. After successes in Iran in 1953 and Guatemala in 1954, the CIA disgraced itself in the Bay of Pigs and Indochina. Within the political establishment, the CIA began to lose its prestige. At the same time, the CIA's political rationale came into question. In the agency's first years, it had focused on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, but beginning in the early fifties, the CIA shifted its attention to what Senator Church later called "small, weak nations" of the third world. It viewed the anti-colonial and nationalist struggles taking place in these nations through the prism of the Cold War, insisting that nationalist reformers like Iran's Mussadegh or Guatemala's Arbenz were conduits for Communist expansion. For many Americans, the war in Vietnam threw into question the CIA's activities in the third world. Later revelations of CIA intervention, from Chile to Angola, only strengthened many Americans' conviction that the CIA was the instrument of an indiscriminate anti-Communism that befriended any anti-Communist regime, no matter how retrograde, and tried to subvert any left-wing regime, believing it to be a beachhead for Soviet Communism.

The Watergate scandal dealt the final blow to the CIA's insularity. The scandal cast doubt upon the right of executive-branch agencies to act without congressional supervision. The revelations about the CIA's attempt to prevent democratically elected Chilean socialist Salvador Allende from taking office in 1970 and about CIA attempts to assassinate Cuba's Fidel Castro and other foreign leaders bolstered congressional and public resolve to rein in the CIA. In the wake of Watergate and of these disclosures, Congress passed legislation requiring covert actions to be justified by an explicit presidential finding and requiring the CIA to notify congressional committees of covert actions.

The post-Vietnam-Watergate battles over the CIA's direction not only pitted a Democratic Congress against the CIA but also one group of CIA officials against another. The principal antagonists were EIA Director William Colby, who sought to reform the agency, and domestic intelligence chief, James Angelton, who had established the extensive domestic surveillance campaign. But in broader terms, the antagonists were the reformers who wanted to restrain the agency's covert action wing and the CIA officials like Angelton and Helms who still clung to the OSS model. In his history of the CIA (*The Agency*, Simon & Schuster, 1986), John Ranelagh reports Colby telling another senior official, "I am going to make the clandestine service part of the CIA, and the CIA part of the intelligence community."

The Carter administration made a valiant initial effort to break with both Cold-War foreign policy and the OSS model for the CIA. Carter laid down the gauntlet in his 1977 Notre Dame speech when he declared that "being confident of our own future, we are now free of that inordinate fear of Communism which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in that fear." Carter's CIA director Stansfield Turner gave preeminence to technical intelligence-gathering. Where covert activity had accounted for half of the CIA budget, it accounted for only 5 percent of the

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budget in the Carter years. In a Presidential Order, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance amended the 1947 act that limited covert actions to those "affecting the national security." Vance insisted that covert actions be "absolutely essential to the national security." But the Carter reforms were swept away when Ronald Reagan took office in January 1981 and appointed Casey his CIA Director.

Casey himself felt great nostalgia for the OSS. Just before joining the Reagan campaign in 1980, Casey had been working on a six-hundred-page manuscript, tentatively titled "The Clandestine War against Hitler," detailing his and Donovan's exploits during World War II. He was an active member of the OSS veterans' organization, a group that included many prominent CIA officials, including former CIA director Helms, who had worked for Casey in London. And like the early CIA directors, Casey tried to model the CIA's covert operation wing on the OSS: he thought it should be operationally independent from the Congress and the public, as well as from the State Department, and that it should do whatever would be necessary to carry out its goal, which for Casey meant rolling back the Soviet empire.

In the fierce Watergate-era battles over the CIA's direction, Casey took the side of Angelton and Helms. He denied that the CIA had done anything wrong in its three decades, and he rejected the need for congressional oversight. In October 1984, speaking before the Association of Former Intelligence Officers, Casey said, "With few exceptions, the highly publicized charges made against the CIA during the mid-seventies turned out to be false. The charges were on their front pages and their refutation buried away so that few people noted them."

To the discerning ear, Casey's contemptuous attitude toward congressional oversight was evident from his confirmation hearings in 1981. "I cannot conceive now of any circumstances under which they would result in my not being able to provide this committee with the information it requires," Casey told the Senate Intelligence Committee. "Well, I thank you, sir," New York Senator Daniel P. Moynihan replied. " I heard you say that you could not conceive any circumstances in which you could not share informationn with this committee." "I said I cannot *now* conceive," Casey replied.

Of course, Casey's attitude toward the CIA was also conditioned by his political backgrouind. Casey was a conservative when Ronald Reagan was still a liberal Democrat. In 1955, Casey drew up the incorporation papers for his friend William F. Buckley, Jr.'s *National Review*. Casey's view of the Soviet Union was that of the early *National Review*: he saw it as the center of an international conspiracy seeking world domination, and he believed that the U.S. should not merely seek to contain, but to roll back Soviet Communism. Casey's anti-Communism does not appear to have had the deeply religious dimension of Buckley's or Whittaker Chambers's anti-Communism. Rather, his view of the Soviet Union was based on an analogy with Nazi Germany and his World War II experience. The Soviets were like the Nazis, and the U.S. was at war with the Soviet Union just as it had been at war with Nazi Germany. Woodward writes in *Veil*: "He, [Casey] virtually said that the United States was at war with the Soviets. 'This is not an undeclared war,' he said, and he compared the times with the years when Hitler was not taken seriously."

Casey divided the globe between territory held by the Soviet Union and territory held by the U.S. His goal was to win territory back from the Soviet Union. "He was interested in taking one back from the Soviets — a clean, visible victory," Woodward writes. For this reason, Casey became obsessed with overthrowing the Sandinistas, whom he believed had handed Nicaragua over to the Soviet Union.

Casey brought into the CIA people who shared his worldview. He made Constantine C. Menges, a right-wing crank from the Hudson Institute, his national intelligence officer for Latin America. Menges had substituted for the old Communist conspiracy what he called a worldwide "destabilization coalition." In Latin America, for instance, Menges saw a coalition of the Soviet Union, local Communist guerrillas, Cuba, Palestinian terrorists, and Libya targeting Central America, Venezuela, Colombia, and Belize with the purpose of eventually toppling Mexico, what Menges called the "main strategic target." In Africa, he saw a similar coalition aiming at South Africa.

Casey put Duane R. "Dewey" Clarridge in charge of covert action in Latin America in spite of Clarridge's ignorance of Spanish and Latin American politics and history. Clarridge, the former Rome station chief, impressed Casey by his "can do" attitude. As Clarridge began to assemble a *contra* army in Honduras, Casey provided him with a "private channel" so that he would not have to go through Casey's deputies.

Casey also established close working relationships with NSC officials. Kenneth de Graffenreid had been on the CIA transition team that had recommended that covert actions become the province of a separate agency and that the CIA and FBI merge into a super domestic surveillance agency. De Graffenreid had a pet theory that the Soviet Union was foiling American electronic surveillance with a vast electronic disinformation project of

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their own. De Graffenreid did not have solid evidence for this theory, but by its nature it was irrefutable. To the despair of Casey's Deputy Director, Admiral Bobby Inman, de Graffenreid became the NSC liaison with the CIA.

Casey's closest tie came to be with Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North. North and Casey planned the *contra* resupply operation together; they worked out the details of the arms-for-hostage swap with Iran; and if North can be believed, discussed the diversion of Iranian arms funds and their use both to fund the *contras* and to set up a secret "off the shelf" action agency. According to Woodward, Casey was a "father figure, an intimate and adviser" to North.

By Reagan's second term, Casey had established his own agency within but also separate from the CIA — an OSS-style operation relying on Menges and other cranks for intelligence, Clarridge and North for execution, and the Saudis for money. In a moment of boastful candor, Casey told a Senate Intelligence Committee staff member, "We have a chance to establish our own foreign policy. We're on the cutting edge. We are the action agency of the government."

Many former intelligence officials like Helms and Ray Cline welcomed Casey's leadership at the CIA. But even according to OSS standards, Casey was an abysmal failure at covert operations. Many of his major operations went awry. His attempt to assassinate a Shiite terrorist leader, Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, resulted in the death of eighty-one innocent people. His guerrilla army in Nicaragua only succeeded in providing the Sandinistas with a pretext for solidifying their own rule. His "opening to Iran" created a scandal that would have forced his own resignation.

Casey was also an abysmal failure at restoring the CIA's intelligence capability, which had been thrown into question during the seventies when the CIA failed to anticipate the OPEC oil embargo and then the fall of the Shah. Casey's attempt to improve intelligence foundered on the rock of his own right-wing ideology. He listened to Menges and to conspiracy buff Claire Sterling rather than to his own intelligence experts. When his own intelligence officer for the Soviet Union told him that Sterling's theories of an international terrorist conspiracy, advanced in her book *The Terror Network*, (Berkley, 1984) lacked evidence, Casey responded, "I paid $13.95 for this [book] and it told me more than you bastards whom I pay $50,000 a year."

Casey saw intelligence as the means of supporting his own covert agenda. Menges had justified the attempt at overthrowing the Sandinistas by pointing to the Soviet threat in Mexico. In the spring of 1984, Casey ordered an intelligence estimate on Mexico. When a junior CIA analyst, based on a week's visit, produced a draft warning of imminent revolution and extensive Soviet and Cuban penetration, Casey approved it. When senior intelligence officer John Horton objected, Casey became furious and charged Horton with wanting to suppress evidence. Horton eventually resigned over the Mexico estimate.

After *Veil* was published, Senate Intelligence Committee members wondered why Casey had been willing to tell Woodward secrets that he had never revealed to them, but it is fairly clear from reading *Veil* that Casey was not Woodward's principal source. Rather, Woodward seems to have relied heavily on former CIA officials who opposed Casey's attempt to remake the CIA. These included former Director Stansfield Turner (who thanked Woodward for his help in the acknowledgments to his own book, *Secrecy and Democracy*, Houghton Mifflin, 1985) and Casey's two former deputies, Admiral Bobby Inman and John McMahon. Inman resigned in 1982 over Casey's attempt to bypass himself and Congress in waging the *contra* war; and McMahon resigned in December 1985 over the Iranian arms deals.

Indeed, *Veil* is another chapter in the continuing debate inside as well as outside the CIA over the agency's purpose and direction. Woodward and *Veil* represent a faction within that debate. As a journalist, Woodward reveals his own perspective through the selection of detail rather than through his own comments on those details. Thus, Woodward virtually ignores the CIA's covert activity in Afghanistan — a more promising subject from Casey's standpoint — and does not attempt to see the agency through the eyes of zealots like Menges, de Graffenreid, or North, but rather through the eyes of the dissenters like McMahon and Inman.

If there is an underlying political view in *Veil*, it is very close to that of Turner in *Secrecy and Democracy*. In his book, Turner charged Casey with attempting to run the CIA like the OSS. He also drew a distinction between an intelligence-oriented and action-oriented CIA that bears directly on Casey's conduct of the CIA. According to Turner, a CIA director has the choice of emphasizing intelligence "while also informing policy-makers about the possibilities of covert action" or emphasizing covert action while "doing his best to keep the intelligence reporting unbiased." Turner favored the former, and he warned that those who emphasize covert action run the risk, as Casey did, of undermining their ability to provide unbiased intelligence.

Turner also favored congressional oversight. He thought that without accountability, the CIA had inevitably abused its own powers. "In thirty years, we [have] shown that the secrecy of intelligence presents temptations and that oversight is needed to keep people from overstepping the bounds tacitly stipulated by the public."

This is the post-Watergate reform view of the CIA. It is shared by the Democrats on the Intelligence Committee and by most of the Democratic candidates for president. But the question raised by *Veil* is whether the CIA can be reformed? Is it enough to emphasize intelligence over covert action and to report covert actions dutifully to Congress?

In *Covert Action*, Gregory Treverton shows why covert action has been so popular with administrations. It is not simply the aura of derring-do, but rather the fact that it seems to represent a "middle option" between doing nothing and openly

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intervening in another country's affairs. Openly intervening can discredit those the U.S. wants to aid by identifying them too directly with the U.S. It can also bring about a superpower confrontation and make withdrawal more difficult. But Treverton insists that covert action is increasingly an illusory option.

Treverton contends that in the wake of Watergate it has become even more difficult to conceal covert actions. "Covert interventions, by definition initiated in secret, nonetheless eventually become public, usually sooner rather than later." Thus, one "covert" action after another, from Chile to Angola to Afghanistan to Nicaragua to Iran, has become "overt" well before it has been concluded, and the U.S. has had to pay a steep price for disclosure, especially in the Iran-*contra* scandal.

Covert action, which is by nature more limited in scope than open intervention, has also become increasingly ineffective. According to Treverton, the CIA's early successes in Iran and Guatemala not only contributed to the agency's recklessness, but educated future CIA opponents about what they would have to do to frustrate the CIA's plans. Che Guevara, who was an adviser to Guatemala's Arbenz, learned the importance of establishing control of the army. Unlike Arbenz or Mussadegh, both of whom courted the U.S., recent targets of CIA intervention like Cuba's Castro, Iran's Khomeini, and Nicaragua's Sandinistas have been able to use CIA opposition for their own political advantage. What they have lost from CIA harassment they have gained in political legitimacy.

Treverton also argues that the goal of covert action — altering a country's politics through secret intervention — is contrary to American purposes. Treverton believes that the U.S. should generally not intervene. "Non-intervention is not only a moral principle. It is also an instrumental value," Treverton writes. "It differentiates us from the Soviet Union and is thus a source of U.S. influence in the world. We believe the example of democracy is a powerful one, one toward which peoples all over the world will gravitate, given the chance. If we believe that, then we must also believe that the example is powerful in our external behavior, not just in our internal arrangements."

Treverton does not think that the U.S. can rule out ever engaging in covert action. There might be cases, Treverton writes, like Iran in 1953 and Guatemala where " the politics of a foreign country [are] so finely balanced that a little U.S. assistance to one side will be decisive." But Treverton acknowledges that such cases "will be rarer and rarer." In effect, Treverton's critique of covert action is a prescription for its *de facto* elimination.

One can carry Treverton's argument a step farther. Under Casey and the conservative Reagan administration, covert action lost whatever genuine purpose it ever had. The CIA's covert action wing became the means of carrying out an interventionist foreign policy that lacked congressional and popular support. Covert action had the advantage of being secret not only from foreign adversaries, but from a critical Congress and public. Treverton is right, of course. There may be circumstances in which covert action would be justified — just as it was clearly justified in World War II. But these circumstances would have to reflect not merely greater congressional oversight, but a basic change in the foreign policy assumptions of those who run the government and the CIA.

BOOKS

Mission to the ends of the earth

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN WORLD POLITICS

Eric O. Hanson

Princeton, $24.95, 455 pp.

John A. Coleman

Eric Hanson has tackled a giant and, basically, tied it down. There exist few more capacious and elusive topics for investigation than the Catholic church in world politics. Few more capacious since the scope of the research includes politico-theological ideology; organizational analysis of the papal service bureaucracy whose mentality the long-time British Vatican watcher, Peter Nichols, describes as "formalistic, fussy, and devotedly jealous"; the Vatican diplomatic corps operating within national boundaries and in international agencies; regional episcopal groupings such as CELAM in Latin America; national church units and episcopal conferences in, e.g., West Germany, Poland, the U.S.A.; and quasi-autonomous transnational units such as *Opus Dei*, the Jesuits, Communion and Liberation, etc. No reader of Hanson could come away seeing the Roman church as a monolith.

Nailing down resource transactions (the transfer of authoritative decisions, money, personnel, and innovative ideas and structures) across national boundaries from the Roman center to the periphery and *vice versa* proves an exceedingly elusive task since Vatican bureaucratic practice, as Hanson contends, shows striking similarities to the Soviets'. Shrouded in secrecy, the real meaning of the periodic musical-chair changing of the curial guard in the

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Byzantine Vatican bureaucracy is often, as in the Soviet system, anyone's guess. Especially with the current, almost pathologically peripatetic pope, no one seems really in charge at the curia. John Paul II, unfortunately, has no Howard Baker. Moreover, the ideological conflation of the curial service bureaucracy with the papacy makes anything like organizational accountability a chimera.

The scope of research covered by Hanson's book is simply daunting. Hanson traces church and politics in France, Britain, Canada, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Protugal, West Germany, Austria, Italy, Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Haiti, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Zaire, the Union of South Africa, Japan, and China!

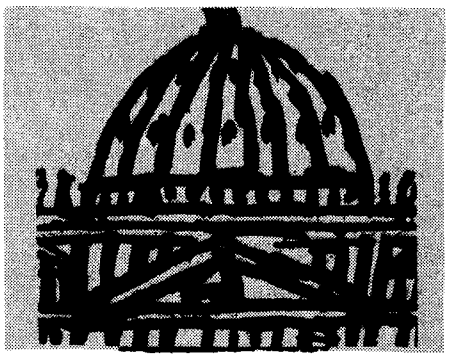
Hanson, a political scientist at the University of Santa Clara, mines secondary sources about these countries with great skill. He runs a risk, however, in his eclectic use of other authors whose explanatory interpretations are not, necessarily, his own. Indeed, the book remains short on explanatory schemes. After exposing us to much vivid and useful descriptive material, we are never quite sure that Hanson demonstrates a coherent Catholic foreign policy or view of world politics. I am not totally convinced, for this reason, that Hanson refutes Peter Nichols's counter-charge: "Politics enters the Vatican's thinking only indirectly. The object is to win and preserve the best position for the church. . . . What it all comes down to is that the Vatican is against what is against its interests and most of all is against a persecuting power."

The two main interests in the study include: (1) the Catholic church in world politics with an emphasis on Soviet and American security policy and the question of arms control; and (2) the impact of modern political and technological developments on the internal politics of the Catholic church. The Vatican wants to play a role of mediator between East and West and pursues its own Ostpolitik. Détente is in the best interests of the Catholic churches in Eastern Europe. But, as Hanson notes, unlike Pope John XXIII who mediated between Kennedy and Khrushchev during the Cuban missile crisis, "it is difficult to imagine this particular pope being perceived as a neutral mediator by the Kremlin." Hanson restricts his treatment of the second topic to "the expressive power" of the Catholic symbol system and the shrewd use of the media by John Paul II whose various trips provide a lens for the countries he visits.

Hanson's sprawling map confuses at times. We move so quickly from country to country and issue to issue. Frequently, Hanson's primary focus is on Vatican foreign policy. He notes, "The Vatican claims that the Catholic church has no foreign policy in the political sense as all its activities are directed toward the religious good of the faithful." Nevertheless, in fact, "Vatican foreign policy most closely approximates that of Jordan in the Middle East, of Austria in its emphasis on fostering East-West relations, of the Netherlands in public support for a European rather than a nationalist orientation, and of the People's Republic of China in focusing on reformist solutions to North-South disparities." Thus, the Vatican is for détente, for international agencies such as the United Nations and the World Court, for religious freedom, for human rights. We are never really given, however, the ideological background to see just how this constellation of foreign policy concerns coheres and why it is not merely adventitious.

Hanson is at his best in dealing with the issues of arms control and peace movements and the Catholic church's role in both. The book is, almost always, a lively read. Nowhere else has this mass of data been so well marshaled. Still, one misses a distinctive perspective or viewpoint that would allow some critical leverage in assessing Catholic political stands.

The major weakness of the book lies in its treatment of a Catholic political culture, too simplistically — it strikes me — juxtaposed to socialism and capitalism. We would need a much better sense of Catholic theories of society than we get here to see how the church is, in Nichols's terms, anything more than a Machiavellian actor maximizing its own institutional interests — a frequent and not entirely incredible charge.



In one section of the book, Hanson contrasts various ideological trends in contemporary world Catholicism: traditional Catholicism, progressive European Catholicism, the liberation poets, and Catholic democratic capitalism. He stresses, unfortunately, representative writers rather than living movements. I would have much preferred to those thumb-nail impressionistic accounts a more systematic teasing-out of comparative church-world stances such as one finds in Daniel Levine's book, *Religion* and Politics in Latin America, or Scott Mainwaring's excellent, *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil*.

Finally, we need a deeper account than Hanson gives of how other trans-national actors constrain the scope of church politics and how institutional interests represent a sort of bottom-line *raison d' église* similar to the constraints of *raison d' état*. The church is less free institutionally than its ideology about politics allows one to believe.

But these are mere cavils. Hanson attempted the near impossible and, basically, pulled it off rather brilliantly. His is a well-written, lively narrative which puts together a staggering mass of recent research on Catholicism as an international system of action, political influence, and belief. Years ago, Robert Graham wrote a book on Vatican diplomacy which, despite its flaws (it is basically overly apologetic to the system) remains the standard work with which one has to contend for starters. I have no doubt that Hanson's book may achieve the same status. I note it is a recent choice of the Catholic Book Club. Buy it! You will learn more about Catholicism and world politics from it than from any other competing source.

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LOOKING FOR MR. GOODWRENCH

THE CIVILIZED ENGINEER
Samuel C. Florman
St. Martin's, $15.95, 258 pp.

Carl Mitcham

Samuel Florman's fourth book continues his lucid *disciplina* of and *apologia* for the engineering profession. The *disciplina* came first, with his *Engineering and the Liberal Arts* (1968), a plea for the greater education of technologists in history, literature, philosophy, art, and music. It was, however, the *apologia* of *The Existential Pleasures of Engineering* (1976) and its follow-up, *Blaming Technology* (1981), that made Florman famous. A critique of the 1970s anti-technology movement and a paean to the inherent satisfactions of engineering work, *Existential Pleasures* caught the public eye. The distinctiveness of *The Civilized Engineer* is that it combines Florman early and late. Not just the critic of technology's critics, he also criticizes engineers and encourages them "to be introspective."

Exemplifying its own appeal, Florman begins with reflections on his previous work. Chapter one considers his dual attraction to engineering and to literature, a combination that led to his first book; chapter two restates his thesis from *Existential Pleasures*. Then come two longer chapters on the history of engineering, a series of pieces on professional engineering ethics, and a collection of more topical articles which originally appeared in *Technology Review*. The heart of Florman's vision, however, is chapters eighteen through twenty-two on "The Civilized Engineer." He concludes with a reflective "personal coda."

The personal tone is actually set at the beginning with a story about how, as young civil engineer in 1945, the navy sent Florman to an island in the Pacific to construct airstrips, Quonset huts, roads, etc. In the evenings he would join other engineers to have a beer, play cards, and talk — about work, sports, and girls. One evening they were joined by a chaplain who tried to interject serious issues — the United Nations, the morality of nuclear weapons, religion in the postwar world, etc. — but was rebuffed each time. In the end he "slammed his cards down on the table, looked upward, and said in a loud voice, 'Dear Lord, I know that I am unworthy . . . but why did you have to abandon me on this island with nobody for company but these boring engineers?'" Despite Florman's conviction that it is "the main business of humankind to build, to be technologically creative" and his "resentment of Plato" and others who denigrate technology, this was a personal epiphany.

But engineers have not always been dull. Florman regrets "the passing of the venerable engineers of the nineteenth century, the Roeblings and their ilk, men of learning and artistic sensibility, scholars as well as doers, leaders who gave the profession an aura of true nobility." Herbert Hoover, who carried this tradition into the early twentieth century, saw "the apprenticeship system replaced by accredited university curricula — including [in his own words] 'wider learning in the humanities.'" With subsequent increases in technical content, engineering education has become ever more specialized and forcefully deprived of much of its experiential character as well as any extensive liberal arts component. Against this background, it is Florman's desire "to plead the cause of a humanistic professionalism, an ennobled engineering that will rise out of the ashes of vocational training."

One does not, of course, have to be broadly educated to be a good engineer, and "hick engineers" (not his term) who subordinate themselves to a team effort compare quite favorably with sophisticated individualistic professionals in terms of practical ability and moral sensitivity. Indeed, in the current debate over engineering ethics, Florman rejects the stress on whistle-blowing and what might be called the Platonic theory of goodness. Good engineers are not those dedicated to some trans-engineering good such as the public welfare. Good engineers do good engineering. As Aristotle says in his criticisms of Plato, "It is hard to see how knowing the 'good itself' will help a weaver or a carpenter in the practice of his own craft, or how anyone will be a better physician or general for having contemplated the Idea itself" (*Nicomachean Ethics* I, 6). Florman wholeheartedly agrees.

Nevertheless, two factors recently have promoted a broader (not to say transcendent) education for engineers. One is the increasing need for communication skills; another is "the fear and suspicion of technology" that derives from nuclear energy, environmental pollution, and the consumer movement.

Florman's own brief for "civilizing engineers" aims to both correct and deepen this cause. Per *apologia*, he stresses that "engineers are already civilized," are in fact "civilizers, since civilization in its most elemental sense means bringing humans physically out of the state of primitive savagery." But per *disciplina*, Florman argues that "if they do not partake of the most sublime creations of civilization — the arts and intellectual discourse — they are not as civilized as they might be."

The liberally educated engineer, it is true, may never be more than a minority of the profession. Yet like the prophetic remnant or the salt of the Gospel, liberal engineers would be "a source of amelioration for our technology and for our society. Enlightened, sensitive, broadly educated engineers — civilized engineers — would endow their work with an additional touch of grace, and in their contact with their fellow citizens would create a more affirmative and profound feeling about engineering than that which exists today." The *disciplina* would in the end work its own *apologia* — as Samuel C. Florman himself ably demonstrates.

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THE ESCAPE BACK TO YOUTH

THE NEO-PAGANS
RUPERT BROOKE AND
THE ORDEAL OF YOUTH
Paul Delany
Free Press, $24.95, 270 pp.

Mark Taylor

Virginia Woolf applied the term "Neo-pagans," which had been used a generation earlier of the Pre-Raphaelites, to a group of young men and women who became close friends at Cambridge around 1908. This group included Rupert Brooke, Justin Brooke (no relation), Frances Darwin Cornford, Gwen Darwin Raverat (both granddaughters of Sir Charles), Jacques Raverat, Katherine or "Ka" Cox, and the four Olivier sisters of whom the most prominent, for Neo-pagan purposes at least, were Brynhild and Noel. These people never had any precisely articulated credo, as Paul Delany's many repetitions of Woolf's term might suggest, but in general for the stodginess of their elders they hoped to substitute youthful spontaneity, for the dreariness of modern urban life, a love of nature and solitude, and for accepted social practices, such new accommodations as swimming together naked.

Their Neo-paganism was, as Delany writes, "an appealing new version of the ubiquitous 'rural myth,' that specially British form of escape from modernity," and it was this strength born of their youth, they thought, that would make this escape possible. Their youth was something even the years could not make them surrender. In a letter Rupert Brooke wrote: "The idea, the splendor of . . . escape back into youth, fascinated us. We imagined a number of young people, splendidly young together, vowing to *live* such an idea, parting to do their 'work in the world' . . . and then, twenty years later, meeting . . . reborn to find and make a new world together. . . ."

"Their great aim," Delany comments, "was to throw off the natural accumulations of age: houses, jobs, spouses, children. One was not made old just by living long, but by accepting a place in society without protest."

If one bears in mind how young these folks were when they found each other — around twenty or younger — none of these idealistic sentiments should sound either unusual or too silly. But they do reveal a great if understandable ignorance of the variety of human feelings. The vision of community that Rupert Brooke and the others represented showed an utterly a- or pre-sexual spirit, and as Delany writes, "the Neo-pagan ideal of comradeship was bound to clash with the realities of sexual desire and possessivness in young men and women alike." The Neo-pagans faced a major paradox. Although marriage was one enemy of their youth, it was only within marriage that the women would be willing to surrender their virginity. Sexual alliances seemed unimportant at first, but after a while they appeared a necessary concomitant of youth and paganism. Delany describes the stresses male passion produced in the collective ideal: "Because the young women . . . expected to remain chaste until they married, the collective spirit of the Neo-pagans kept sexuality in the background, or even tried to deny it altogether. But the young men were becoming impatient with this sexual moratorium. How long could the girls they loved go on hinting that they would embrace sensuality some day — but not yet?"

The Neo-pagans were far more old-fashioned and puritanical in attitude than they chose to admit, and their inability to live comfortably in either the former age or the new one temporarily powerless to be born, made them, especially Rupert Brooke, thoroughly miserable much of the time. This misery, its causes (some of which I have outlined), and its consequences are much of the story Delany tells. His thesis is that Brooke never did succeed in working out his woman problems (greatly exacerbated by the demands of his very strong mother and ardent and not entirely unsuccessful persuit of various honmosexuals.)

Despite some long-delayed but triumphant consummations, when he went off to war in 1914, he did so in the main, not because of the glorious motives usually ascribed to him (after his death Winston Churchill called him "all that one would wish England's noblest sons to be"), but to escape his own problems. "The great lie of the Rupert Brooke myth," Delany writes, "was that the vernal optimism of 1909 was still untarnished in 1914, when it was brutally crushed by the war. In fact, the hopes of 1909 had been slain by their own contradictions, long before."

Doubtless there is much truth in this contention that all was not well with the Neo-pagans by 1914, but Delany's study fails to make these young men and women important enough to us that their difficulties can matter much. One does not learn here that at least some of them were exceptionally gifted. The Rupert Brooke who emerges in this book, insofar as he is distinct from any other confused young man trying to understand himself and to get his girlfriend to say yes to sex, is a creature of such unbelievable

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fatuity that one wonders what drove the author to his labors or what he supposes will attract most readers to this portrait. The "Rupert Brooke myth" can no longer have so strong a hold on the imagination that it cries out for demolition.

Of Brooke's really laudable accomplishments and of his intellectual life in general there is scarcely a word in *The Neo-pagans*. Brooke is a minor poet — probably a minor minor rather than a major minor poet; even so he deserves more than the judgment that he "was a better poet than most of the Georgians, and less simple-minded about his enthusiasms." Brooke was a superb essayist and travel writer; the pieces collected as *Letters from America* offer a young Englishman's remarkable account of his observations in the States and the islands of the Pacific. Out West, prompted by the photograph of an old Indian woman named Laughing Earth, Brooke wrote that "old age is only a different kind of merriment from youth, and a wiser," an observation to which we might give at least as serious attention as to his mindless praise of the young.

Delany twice mentions Brooke's study of John Webster but does not suggest that the monograph was important pioneering work in the resurrection, early in this century, of the Jacobean dramatists. And in a similar vein, Delany does not mention at all the essays Brooke wrote on John Donne, which influenced—indeed, may have determined—T. S. Eliot's famous and enduring formulations about metaphysical sensibility (as J. E. Duncan showed almost thirty years ago).

Brooke's prolonged juvenile enthusiasms, his posturings, and his hysterical outbursts interest us, I hope, only because he did good things in spite of them.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 722)

political system does not violate these standards. . . .

DANIEL McCARTHY

Bork & God's choice

Mr. Laurel, N.J.

To the Editors: I have suspected . . . that the editorial bent of your magazine was anti-moral, and now your editorial against Bork [October 9] proves it.

What liberal hogwas adout Bork's "disturbing" positions on various points of the law. Our Lord and Savior said, "by their fruits you shall know them." It makes little difference what "expressed" logic a man uses to get to the truth or right conclusion. . . . Bork . . . has stood for respecting legitimately constituted authority, order, and discipline. Am I suggesting that a vote against Bork is a vote against God? You figure it out for yourself. As our Holy Father pointed out, "with the right to choose goes the obligation to choose well." . . . The longer we wait to get a man or woman on the Supreme Court who will protect the lives of unborn babies—the more will die. Thanks a lot for choosing the forces of darkness!

JACK BLAND

Male call

To the Editors: A correction to my last column. Either a typo on my part or the printer's has Douglas Kiker referred to as "she." He is indubitably male.

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

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23rd Biblical Institute, Trinity College, Burlington, VT 05401, June 19-24. Faculty: Gerald O'Collins, Alice Laffey, William Holladay, Howard Clark Kee. Write: Sr. Miriam Ward.

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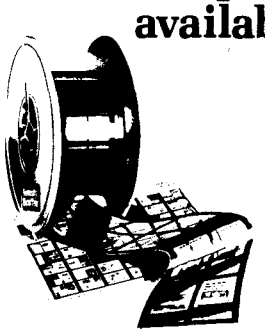

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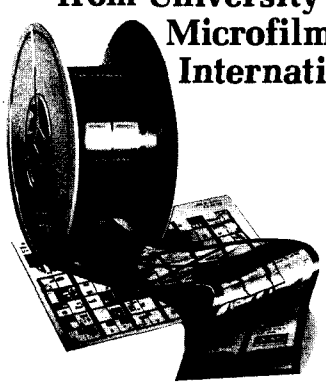

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"Help me fight the National Rifle Association."

"Six years ago, John Hinckley pulled a $29 revolver from his pocket and opened fire on a Washington street. He shot the President. He also shot my husband.

I'm not asking for your sympathy. I'm asking for your help.

I've learned from my own experience that, alone, there's only so much you can do to stop handgun violence. But that together, we can confront the mightiest gun lobby–the N.R.A.–and win.

I've only to look at my husband Jim to remember that awful day... the unending TV coverage of the handgun firing over and over... the nightmare panic and fear.

It's an absolute miracle nobody was killed. After all, twenty thousand Americans are killed by handguns every year. Thousands more–men, women, even children–are maimed for life.

Like me, I know you support *stronger* handgun control laws. So does the vast majority of Americans. But the National Rifle Association can spend so much in elections that Congress is afraid to pass an effective national handgun law.

It's time to change that. Before it's too late for another family like mine... a family like yours.

I joined Handgun Control, Inc. because they're willing to take on the N.R.A. Right now we're campaigning for a national waiting period and background check on handgun purchases.

If such simple, basic measures had been on the books six years ago, John Hinckley would never have walked out of that Texas pawnshop with the handgun which came within an inch of killing Ronald Reagan. He lied on his purchase application. Given time, the police could have caught the lie and put him in jail.

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It's time we kept handguns out of the wrong hands. It's time to break the National Rifle Association's grip on Congress and start making our cities and neighborhoods safe again.

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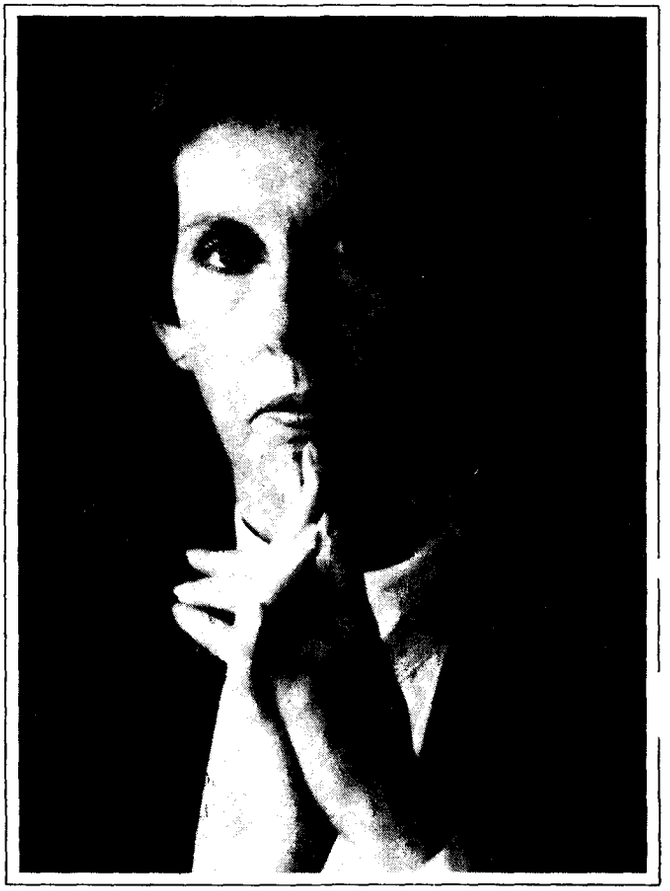

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